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THE
STORY OF A LIFE.

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SCENES AND IMPRESSIONS IN EGYPT AND ITALY,
RECOLLECTIONS OF THE PENINSULA, &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

IN this age of restlessness and excitement, when so many are wandering, and so many are sighing to wander, I have thought that the imaginary life of a weak and wayward being, self-exiled, and subjected through long years to vicissitude and sorrow, might not be altogether devoid of interest, or perhaps, indeed, without its use.

To have filled up well the outline of this conception would have required a bolder hand, and a finer touch than mine.

To the young, the contented, and the cheerful, this defective tale will offer no attractions ; but among readers, these form an innocent, and a happy minority.

In the hope, however, that the scenes and situations scattered through these pages may interest a very different class, may divert a melancholy hour, or awaken a salutary thought, I will dismiss the sensitive anxiety, with which I commit this —

“ story of a life

And the particular accidents gone by,”

to the easily offended eye of taste, and the ungentle frown of criticism.

INTRODUCTION.

ON a pleasant spring morning in the year 1790, an elderly stranger arrived in the town of Southampton, by the mail. There was nothing to common observers very remarkable in his appearance — save, that his countenance bespoke him a foreigner; but then he was like other foreigners, often seen in those parts; that is—thin, rather tall, stooped a little, had sallow cheeks, and wore a loose, ill-made great-coat. The very moment the waiter opened the coach door, and discovered him to be the only passenger, he stepped a pace backwards, buttoned his breeches pocket, gave a sneer, and suffered him to alight from the vehicle unassisted. It is true he had rightly conjectured that he should

draw no cork for the pale emigrant, but he was mistaken in pettishly giving up all hope of his sixpenny fees. The stranger, a thoughtful looking person, descended from the carriage without seeming to expect, or require assistance. He went up to a chamber to wash — ordered breakfast to be ready in two hours, and strolled forth alone. In this short interval, he found, and engaged, a small, quiet lodging in a country-like suburb, called Orchard-Lane — rescued, and bought, a little beaten half-starved dog, in his walk back to the inn — breakfasted — paid his bill — gave the astonished waiter a shilling; and by twelve o'clock he had laid himself down to repose after his journey, on that bed, in which for ten years he peacefully slept; and in which he quietly died.

He was a man of mystery; as he came, so he lived, unknowing and unknown. Conjecture was busy with him for nine days, or weeks perhaps; and then he became an accustomed sight — a face belonging to the platform, and the beach, when the tide was up. There, I remember when I was a little boy, and used to walk

out with my hand in my father's hand, we often met him.

I grew up from boy to man, and forgot him ; but, when, after long years of absence I stood again upon Southampton beach, I thought upon his face ; and how he had lived, and walked about there — alone — and had died perhaps — alone.

My path homeward led past the door, which I had often seen him enter. I could not help, knocking, and asking to see the old landlady. She was dead also ; but a daughter of the old lady, a woman past fifty came out, and asked me into her parlour, and answered all my enquiries concerning the remembered stranger with interest, and pleasure. Quakerlike in her dress ; quakerlike (or *very kind*) in her manners, she was just that sort of personage, of whom we find a few scattered here and there, as if expressly to let a kind of home to the forlorn and solitary members of society's better class, and to give them in the decline of life that benevolent care, that tenderness of attention, which they have no longer either fond relatives, or at

tached domestics to supply. It was from her I learned the little circumstances of the morning, when he first came to them. She had gathered them from the poor waiter, who, having been entirely supported by the bounty of this stranger during a severe winter of sickness, and destitution, told her of them with tears of shame.

It seemed that he had lived on a small annuity of two hundred a year, and had a thousand pounds in the hands of a London banker. This last he never once mentioned during his life-time, always representing himself as a person whose income would die with him, and, in confirmation, keeping a small sealed paper, on which he showed a superscription signifying that it contained a sum sufficient to pay his funeral expenses. When this was opened at his decease it was found to contain a testamentary document, willing the sum of one thousand pounds to his landlady.

She said that he was a calm, cheerful, meek man, very kind to the poor, and very considerate to every one; that his health was very

delicate; that he read a great deal; was a devout, silent man; seldom speaking on religious subjects, and that, owing to the state of his nerves, and his suffering from head aches, he seldom went to church. She took me up stairs, and showed me the room in which he had lived, and the chamber where he died.

In a glass case were a few large old books of history, geography, and travels; Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy; Thomas a Kempis; Robinson Crusoe; and a black letter Bible. There was also a manuscript volume, written in a very cramped, difficult hand. It seemed a common place book, for in the first few leaves I found only extracts from favourite authors; among others these lines from an old book of emblems, by George Withers.

if tempests were not,
Such comforts could not by a calm be brought.

And immediately after, my eye caught the opening of a narrative, which seemed, as if it were some notice concerning his past life.

This conjecture the perusal of a few pages confirmed. At my earnest request, the kind old lady, cheerfully lent me the volume, on condition that I was to acquaint her with the contents. That condition I have fulfilled, and she has given the manuscript to me. It contains the life, and fortunes of a miserable, a deservedly miserable man; a wayward, unstable being. — Melancholy, and merited his misfortunes certainly were; yet when I recollected how in my boyhood I had seen the beggars bow down to him; and how the children at play would smile up in his face; how the unhatted orphan would bend, and smooth down his hair to him, and the little charity girl set down her pitcher to drop him a child's curtesy — why I mourned over so early a shipwreck of the hopes, the happiness, and the honor of one so calculated, under different circumstances, to have enjoyed, and adorned existence.

THE
STORY OF A LIFE.

“What is this World? What axen men to have?”

FIVE-AND-THIRTY years have passed, since, in that high and happy excitement of feeling, to which even the parting from those who love us lends a new and rapturous emotion, all burning with hope, and exulting to be free, I left my peaceful home.

Five-and-thirty years !

The “God bless, preserve, and prosper you !” of my anxious father still vibrates on my ear, in the same tremulous tone in which it was uttered.

The agitated step of my fond mother, as she hurried away from our last embrace; the beautiful face, paler than I had ever seen it, which looked with a scarce-permitted gaze from the window of my sister's chamber, are still present to me.

The farewell of a groupe of servants, half lament, and half encouragement, enabled me to mount my horse without a pause, and gave relief to a heart, which beat in my bosom, as if it would have burst the throbbing barrier. Fast fell my tears. For two miles I rode at a rapid thought-dispelling pace; then pulling up, proceeded at a lingering walk; and on tree, on bush, on rivulet, around, gazed fondly, as if they could carry to my home a later look, a last adieu.

As I was beginning to ascend a frequented and favourite hill, a hand caught and pressed my knee — the hand of Edward, my young, my only brother. Hither had he run before me, to ensure a parting, later, longer, and all his own. Up this hill, his hand still pressing me, and his streaming eyes now lifted to my face, and now bent upon the ground, he walked in struggling

silence by my horse's side. At the corner of a forest-lane, which led to one of our summer haunts, he burst from me with sudden speed, and was out of sight in a moment. How I loved him — he was then only fourteen — full of genius, and, what is better, of goodness — very affectionate in his gentle manners, of a quiet contented disposition. He never had seen (ah, happy boy !), he never did see the world.

There is always a sunniness on the past. How often in my sad and eventful life have I closed my wearied eyes to shut out the scene before me, and looked back upon my forest home, till my pressed eyelids have been forced to open for the warm and gushing burst of sorrow. Now, I never weep ; but they, who should gaze fixedly on my withered cheek, might trace the deep-worn channel of a life's tears. The broad mirror now reflects to me a form I scarce can recognize. My curling, thick, and raven locks are thin and gray. My full dark eye is sunken. My limbs, once my vain pride, are shrunk ; and the world sweeps me with her rustling silks, as one too many in her gay and busy throng.

Yet let me pause. This murmuring is sin. — I am a lone, a solitary man, but I am happy : yes, happy in my hope ; and whenever in this narrative I paint in too vivid colouring the fancied good I sought, think not it would be now my choice ; think not that, could I again live over my youthful days, schooled, disciplined, as I have been, I would so fondly dote on earth. My thirst is slaked for ever. To my tale —

An hour's ride brought me to the quiet old sea-port town of Southampton. For the first time I turned from its fair and cheerful street, to visit which had been always, in my boyhood, a holiday to my young fancy ; and, learning at the Inn that the ship in which my passage was taken would not sail till the evening, I hastened to the solitary beach to give a free course to all the contending feelings that stirred within me.

Some short account of my family, and my earlier years, is almost necessary to the reader. He will the better understand and judge of the actions recorded ; and while he much condemns, he may also much pity me.

My father, Walter Beavoir, was an only

child, became an orphan at the early age of seven, and passed his youth under the protection and guardianship of Sir William Mowbray, his maternal uncle. He was educated at Eton, and completed his studies at Cambridge. At one-and-twenty years of age, he found himself possessed of a fortune of four thousand a year : it was reduced, before he was thirty, to an income of twelve hundred. Of the emptiness and insipidity of a life of mere pleasure ; of the hollowness of friendships formed amid the assemblies of the gay, and in the haunts of the sensual, he had full and early experience. Marriages, they say, are made in heaven. He had reason to think so ; — not that my mother was his first love, or he the first object of her virgin affections : no ; they had both loved — both sorrowed over broken loves. They met in the world's crowd. Each spoke a language the other alone seemed formed to understand. They talked to each other as the melancholy talk. True sympathy, the offspring of a bleeding heart, will often heal its bleeding fellow. They grew less sad, serenely loved, and, without transports, married.

That such a pair should seek the quiet retreat of a residence in the country was natural : they did so. Not far from the sweet village of Beaulieu, in the depth of the New Forest, stood the house in which I was born ; a comfortable sheltered mansion, having a strong protecting look ; and within, oh ! it was a little world of smiles and peace. Content had found or made a nest in the bosom of every inmate. The very barking of our dogs at the hall door was that of welcome ; and the strange gipsy child would fearlessly approach alone. Sad, alas ! was the error of my tender father. The talents of a neighbouring clergyman who was charged with the care of educating me from my earliest years, and the affectionate interest he took in my progress, determined my parents to leave the task of fitting me for the world entirely to him, to keep me unspotted by it, till armed in proof I might go forth, in the confidence of an anticipated triumph, over every temptation, which should beset my path. — Fatal, mistaken error ! Vernon was the last man calculated to build up the character of his pupil to

that tower-like strength against which the waves of this wild world might beat, and chafe themselves in vain.

He spoke of religion, and it was a lovely song. I listened with a raptured ear. He spoke of virtue; still it was a lovely song. Every thing he taught, it was with a poet's tongue; every object he looked upon, it was with a poet's eye. We read, and I caught some portion of his feeling and his fire. We rode, walked, rambled through the wide forest. — How short were those long summer days!

The greenwood tree — the startled deer — the timid fawn — the cooing of the plaintive dove — the stroke of the woodman's axe — the murmur of waters — the toll of the curfew bell — and, of all rural sounds, that sweetest, the whetting of the mower's scythe, as, late in the red evening light, he pauses, then, bending down and forward, cuts on again deep into the dewy grass, — such sights and sounds we loved.

The best thing he taught me was pity for the poor. Many a time have I seen him kneel by the poor man's bed. Many a time have I caught

the silent hidden alms given with a delicate pressure of the hand : — for Vernon did not fear to touch the poor. Oh ! he was a Christian. He is in heaven, surely, surely. I saw him laid in his grave three years before the period of which I write ; and I remember, as it were yesterday, the grave faces of the cotters, and the moistened cheeks of the poor women, and the little awful looks of the young children, as they crowded into the small church, and gazed, with still eyes, upon the good man's coffin.

Poor Vernon ! — He was a stricken deer, and had fled from the cold world to our forest depths ; and so grateful was he to God for the shelter, so much did he love it, he forgot that I might some day leave it. He saw not why I should ; how I could.

An innocent life ; a quiet grassy tomb ; the love of the poor, while living ; their regret, when dead ; — these things he planned for me on his pillow ; and therefore it was, that, although he bade me love my God, as the first great commandment, he dwelt little on the weakness and corruption of our nature.

He died, and I mourned him. The total seclusion in which we lived caused his loss to be deeply felt by us all; for, at our fireside, he daily sat, with that happy, fond, fearless acceptance of our hospitality, belonging to his generous nature. To me it was irreparable.

The only two families with whom we lived on terms of intimacy were those of a Mr. Frankland and a Colonel Hamilton. The first was a plain, worthy, country gentleman, who farmed his own estate, and whose wife and family, consisting of two daughters and a son, nearly of age, were all which such a father could desire.

The Colonel was a widower and childless. He had served with distinction in different quarters of the world, and was a noble-looking ruin of a fine soldier. He spoke the continental languages with ease and fluency; and during his services in the East had acquired some knowledge of Arabic and Persian. He was a princely horseman, and as he had been severely wounded in the leg, it was the only exercise he used.

With that methodical distribution of time which marked the old commander, he might always be seen, at a certain hour of the day, in the far vista of the forest road, which led from his white gates, mounted on a favourite Arabian, gentle as a tame fawn, but vigorous and fleet as the flying stag, or fierce and red-eyed as the same animal, angrily at bay. My father and I often joined him in his ride. I had always looked with a sort of sad veneration on him; for his wife and all his little ones had perished at sea, the vessel in which they had left India having foundered on her passage home. Ignorant of his loss, he had followed his darling treasures and passed unconsciously over their watery grave. An elderly sister had hurried to him, as affectionate consoler, and still cheered his melancholy home.

Though I respected the single-hearted Mr. Frankland, and liked his manly, intelligent son, yet I far preferred the society of Colonel Hamilton. Of love I never thought; for the Miss Franklands, though pretty, amiable, well-informed, and well-bred, inspired me with no other feeling than that ready liking, or kindness,

which we always have for the cousin or the sister's friend, seen daily from our boyhood.

Edward was all too young to be my companion, at that time: constantly, therefore, was I to be found at Colonel Hamilton's, sitting by, listening, or reading to him; or else among his arms, curiosities, and antiquities; out, perhaps, on his lawn, trying the Tartar bow, the Mogul lance, or the Damascus blade: or, farther in the wood, practising at a mark with his Tyrolese rifle; or, trying against a villainous kite the treacherous blow-pipe of the Malay; or, yet happier, spurring by his side through the long, long avenues of our noble forest.

One day, as after a rapid course we checked our generous animals to breathe them, I observed two men seated by the way side, so entirely different in their appearance to any I had ever seen, that the sight drew from me an exclamation of surprise and pleasure.

One of them was a middle-aged man, with a very brown complexion, very black eyes, white teeth, a beard covering and hanging from his chin, and large ear-rings golden or gilt.—The

colour and fashion of his garb was bright and oriental; his robe of pale blue; his cap red, the turban folds around it of white cotton.

His companion was an elderly hale man, with a dark, foreign aspect, and small ear-rings, his dress common. A small square mahogany case with leathern straps, a bundle of red slippers, and a huge pack of basket-work, filled with rude and gaudy prints, spy glasses, small mirrors, toys, and other trifles, lay between them.

The Colonel readily saw what they were, and addressed them accordingly. The one was a Levantine, a common vender of Turkey rhubarb; a Christian he told us, though hooted after in some places; shunned and fled from in others, for a Turk. The other was an old itinerant merchant of that happy lowly class, who have homes and families on the beauteous shores of the Lake of Como. I remember, now, how animatedly they replied, and how all their features sparkled up as the Colonel, with a winning art, peculiarly his own, conversed with them for many minutes in Italian, concerning their

countries, and their wanderings : the questions and replies were laughingly interpreted to me. They were all trifling, but not inconsequent, that is, not inconsequent to me ; and, as we rode back, the Colonel unconsciously added fuel to the fire which the sight of these strangers, acting on an idle mind, had kindled in my youthful bosom. He was in a frank communicative mood ; I, eager and inquiring. — With thirsty ears I drank in all that fell from a lip carelessly yet naturally eloquent. Past scenes and days seemed rising before him, as he spoke of the delight with which in early life he had traversed Italy, the isles of Greece, the Levant, the silent forsaken plains of Troy ; and of the unrivalled glorious grandeur of the site of Constantinople ; saying of this last, I well remember, that it were worth the trouble and confinement of a voyage, to pass one day, from rise to set of sun, merely gazing on it from a vessel's deck. After dismounting, he led me to his study, took down a large portfolio of valuable engravings, which I had never before seen, and pointed out to me several very striking

and picturesque scenes from nature, and many others, in which massive and majestic ruins were shadowed forth in so bold a manner, that the gazer at once felt a something of that awe, which the gray monuments themselves might be supposed to inspire. The subjects were all Italian; and I thought Italy, from these specimens, a land, or rather a paradise, of wonders. He continued to dwell on the subject of his travels with a cheerfulness of tone, and brightness of the eye, unusual in him. I could have looked at these prints, and listened to him for hours; but we accidentally alighted on one, which, as it met his glance, caused him with a sudden shuddering to close the case, and, with a strong pressure of the hand, silently to dismiss me.

The print which had so moved him was a celebrated storm-piece; the helpless vessel in her last struggle with the fury of a gale. The crested top of a giant wave, on whose dark bosom lay a dismantled, ungovernable hull, seemed in the very act of breaking upon her, in its destroying strength.

With a ready sympathy I had felt my eyes

fill with tears as we parted ; yet soon — almost instantly, my mind reverted to the scene of the morning. All that was said at the time and after recurred to me. The old pedlar had sadly complained of our gloomy foggy climate, of the dulness of our people's amusements ; of the absence of music ; of the want of wine and oil. It was the chill month of November, and the forest leaves were falling. The day was cloudy and cold ; the very deer in the opener glades looked comfortless ; and instead of lying to the last moment in their sunny lairs, then flying off with flexible haunches, and saucy boundings, — they stood with half-closed eyes, or slowly crept on with pausing paces, nibbling the dead grass, and turning it, as tasteless, in their half-opened mouths. Every thing looked dull. I thought not of the healthy sports of winter ; of the oaken parlour, and its sea-coal fire ; of the sweet and rational enjoyments of our evening circle round it : my fancy was on the wing for sunny climes ; for the song, the dance, the guitar, the masker and his music, the vine, the trelliced vine and the sacred olive.

In the streets of a city, such things as foreign men, and foreign garbs are often seen, and soon forgotten : but it is not thus in the unrelieved solitude of country life.

Those who have gone through schools and mingled minds with their young playmates, learn much which prepares them for the world, and in a way which no private tuition can supply ; especially when, as in my case, your childhood has no fellow. From the time I left off chasing the butterfly, and fishing for the minnow (and that was early), I ceased to be a boy. I never was a boy—a happy, hot, unbuttoned, cricket-playing boy, with young loves, young cares, young friendships, and young emulous struggles of the body and the genius. Men were my play-fellows : my tender nervous father, and the gentle Vernon, these were my play-fellows. Yes, luckily for me, I had one other, a better in his way, and, all lottery as it was, a safe one—Godfrey, a servant. He was about ten years older than myself ; and had been taken into the family as my pony-groom, when I was only five years of age. The attachment he then formed

for me was of a nature the most simple and sincere. In all those exercises, which, but for him, none would have taught me, I soon became proficient. I ran, I leaped, I swam, I climbed, I dropped from wall or tree, with vigour, activity, and a sure confidence in myself. I had a quick eye and a steady hand with the fowling-piece, and also with the bow and arrow. I could row a boat, steer her, and manage her sails. I feared nothing, for I knew nothing to fear: moreover, I had got among the poor foresters, and with Godfrey himself, a reputation for great daring, because I had twice visited by moonlight the gray and ivy-mantled ruins of Netley Abbey; because, by the same light I had been seen at the Rufus stone, and near the growing oak of Baddesley, and once under the large old yew-tree which o'er shadows the small quiet church of Dibden. An old Christian lady who was beheaded in her gray hairs at Winchester, after the memorable and bloody assize of the ferocious judge Jefferies, is said to have been buried beneath it; and it is with a hasty step, that the belated hind does always pass

the haunted spot. In truth, I liked such rambles. The abbey walls of Beaulieu, and that old dwelling called the abbot's house, with its ancient front, its Gothic canopy and empty niche, its treacherously numerous stair-cases and long passages, its vaulted hall and arched gateway of stone, were the scenes of some of my earliest musings, and nursed my young fancy. But now, of a sudden, I turned aside from all my wonted pleasures. My life seemed to me an unworthy state, loathsome and ignoble, like a pool in the forest which the cattle turn from, still, slimy, green, stagnant.

I did not, indeed, very narrowly examine my wishes, to see whither they would lead me, or what final end I proposed. It was not a martial glow that I was heated by. It was not a defined and worthy enterprise. I had thought of no profession which it might be becoming to pursue. My sister and brother being already provided for by a large bequest from an uncle, my assured fortune and the wish of my father pointed to a life

with no other employ than the plain and conscientious discharge of the easy duties of a country gentleman; the rights and the happiness of tenants and poor neighbours my only cares. But a restless enemy had now found his way into my heart. I became moody, discontented, and, of course, unhappy; for my melancholy seemed to me, even then, a sort of guilty ingratitude to heaven. I tried to bear up before my father and mother; but Mr. Somers, the clergyman, who had succeeded to Vernon, and with whom Edward daily studied, perceived and spoke to me of the remarkable change in my manners, and the evident depression of my spirits. Somers was an excellent minister, a mild, a simple-hearted, plain-spoken man. My tender regard, however, my cherished affection for the memory of Vernon, prevented my appreciating his good qualities, or loving his counsels.

Where could I find a friend, a confidant, an adviser to aid me in my schemes? Where does a brother always who has a sister? To her I flew; with her I walked and talked away the long day;

and young Edward was the happy listener and the gentle suggester of affectionate modes to reconcile our parents to my short absence. One year, only one year. No man ever saw so much as I was to see in that one year. No man ever returned to his fireside with such a stock of anecdote and description as I was to return with. — Travel and adventure ! — I thought, I dreamed of nothing else.

The pedlar and the rhubarb-vender led up every vision of the night ; and a long series of engravings from the works of Salvator Rosa, Claude, Poussin, his brother and others, furnished out the rest ; — colours, buildings, rocks, trees, waters, figures, animals, all perfect. At times, too, (strange phantasm !) every thing seemed to start out into life just as in a camera obscura, retaining their diminutive proportions ; and I often awoke half laughing and half serious, and, with a kind of childish sadness, would regret that the world contained no Lilliput. Time rolled on till this desire of travel, this aching romantic want, gained all the strength of irresistible passion. At length, I determined to break

my wishes to my father. Afraid I could not be of such a father; yet I dreaded giving him pain; and (ah, human nature!), I feared, more than all, that, indulgent, docile, and tractable as was his nature, he would firmly refuse my request. He did. A thousand times since have I called up all his feeling, sensible remonstrances. He offered to accompany me to London for a short visit, that I might see, and taste the pleasures of a city; to make a tour with me in Wales; to send me (too late, alas! he thought of this) to the university.

“Oh! it was not pleasure, mere pleasure that I wanted,” was my reply; neither to look on scenes, manners, and customs at home. As to the university, I had heard himself say, that it was a lottery whether a man turned out a rake or a pedant, a freethinker or a Christian. No — if I could not have my wish, I was content to vegetate (for life I said it could not be called) at home. My father heard me with deep sorrow. His eyes seemed suddenly to open. He lifted, and clasped his hands in great agony of mind. He saw his own fatal error; but he felt my ingrati-

tude — felt it as an arrow from his God. I, too, saw the wound — I, who had launched the weapon. As he averted his face to hide his emotion, I threw myself upon his neck ; I wept, I kissed him. I told him that I hated myself for the proposal which had so pained him, still more for the tone in which I had urged it. I gave up my wish : I dismissed it from my heart, not merely as a sacrifice of inclination to duty, but as a guilty, unclean thing ; one that had first brought sin to me, and misery to him. I was sincere ; that is, I so deemed myself. Our reconciliation was full ; a long out-pouring of hearts and affections. Peace, content, gaiety was restored. Harriet and Edward, who had never, in their fond innocent hearts, really approved my scheme, looked relieved and happy. The only person who doubted the sincerity, or rather the firm and lasting character of this resignation of my will, was Somers. He told me apart that he had rather I had seen a little of this world, concerning which I was so eager, in proper, protecting company, as he thought the fever of my mind would soon and effectually have been

cured. This, I own, surprised me, for I had always reckoned on his unqualified disapprobation, nay, active opposition to my plan.

All for some time went smoothly on. Week after week we used to get down our journals and magazines. I generally fastened on a paper of the Rambler; at first, merely because the name caught me; but I never rose from the perusal of one of those golden essays, that I did not feel a wiser, a better, too, as I thought, and, of course, a happier man. Perhaps there is no greater or more common error than to substitute the cheap love of virtue for a simple, self-denying obedience to its dictates.

A circumstance soon occurred which brought back my old longing.

A fine boy of thirteen, a nephew of Somers's and a midshipman belonging to a frigate lately returned from a long cruise, came to pass a few days with his uncle, and was brought by him to our table. I have the image of the fearless little fellow before me, in his vest of true blue, with his anchor button, and the open frilled shirt collar of his age. Youth, health, and intelli-

gence gave a beauty to features otherwise not remarkable; but, above all, the bronzing of southern suns had robbed his young cheek of their roses, and left the brown hue of honour in their room.

There is always a dignity in encountering danger; there is always a ready sympathy for those who endure hardship; but when toil, exposure, and peril are sought voluntarily, and exulted in, and this too by a *boy*, we look on him with wonder.

At his tender age, he had been in a severe contest between the frigate he served in and two Algerine cruisers of the very largest class, one of which was sunk in the action, and the other taken with a great loss on both sides. It was strange to hear so young and soft a voice relating, artlessly, as he was questioned, a tale of struggling and blood.

It was charming to listen, as he naturally dwelt upon the looks, arms, and dresses of the Moors, and told of his surprise and delight.

He had also seen much as a traveller; had been on shore with his Captain at Smyrna and

Athens; and, at Lisbon, had passed nearly a week with the envoy. Though a quiet, unpretending boy, subdued by discipline and a hard manly course of life into reserve, an arch expression of his sparkling eye told you what he was with messmates and at the head of his own boat's crew; and he had a frank readiness of reply to every question. I asked — listened — gazed; at times, he answered my enquiries with a snile and surprise at the ignorance they betrayed; at others, with a kind of seriousness and confusion, because he could not understand them; but he saw that he was an object of my notice and regard, and for the few days that he staid in the forest he attached himself closely to me. Accustomed to the confinement of a ship, the rides, rambles, and excursions I planned for him won his young heart. He told me of all that he had seen and done, enjoyed and suffered; and when he bade me farewell, it was with that cheerful sincerity of regret, that implied an honest wish to meet me again. I rode back from Buckler's Hard, the day that he had taken boat there for Portsmouth with Somers, whom

I had never liked so well as when he used to look on his hopeful nephew with evident pride, and hearken to him with that grave but sweet smile of indulgence, which seems distinctly to say, "Ah ! boy, be happy while you may."

When I laid down on my pillow that night, I could not compose myself to sleep. *The child* from whom I had that morning parted, had been in battle — in storms at sea — had walked the wet and slippery deck at midnight in a shaggy watch coat, and had learned to think in darkness and in silence. That natural taste, too, which we all, more or less, have for novel, romantic, and pleasurable sensations, had in him been thus early gratified ; for he had climbed the walls of the Parthenon at Athens ; had seen the glittering cupola of the Mosque, and the turbaned Mahometan ; had been among crows and in convents ; had listened to the guitar and the serenade. I arose unrefreshed ; day after day I lost appetite, spirits, health. Somers, in common with all the family, marked the sad change.

After much hesitation on the part of my father it was at last agreed that I should go that

winter, for change of air and scene, to Lisbon. It was a common thing at that day to send invalids there for the sake of its fine climate; and my father, who knew Lisbon, was not without a hope, that its dirt, discomfort, and the ignorance of the people would give me a thorough surfeit of the pleasures of travel.

Colonel Hamilton gave me a letter of introduction which insured me a cordial reception, and a residence during my stay, in the mansion of a very distinguished nobleman of Portugal; a circumstance which greatly delighted me, as it would certainly afford me a better opportunity for seeing, and judging of, the manners and customs of a foreign people. No sooner was this plan, which had been arranged between Somers, Colonel Hamilton, and my father, mentioned to me, than I was all thankfulness, hope, and joy; expressed myself in a way that quieted many of my father's apprehensions, and promised to return at the appointed time, and think no more of travel.

Here, then, I stood upon the beach gazing at the ready vessel with her loosened topsail; re-

joining in my freedom, and rich in the confirmed discovery that I was so very dear to all at home.

It was near sun-set when the faithful Godfrey, who had brought in my baggage from Beaulieu, summoned me to the boat. He looked very grave, and even sad.

“ Well, master,” said he, “ I don’t like this vagary of going to foreign parts. I sha’n’t sleep sound till I do see you back. Home’s home, as the old saying goes, and there is no place like it, and that you will find, master Osman.”

“ Why, Godfrey, it is only a trip for pleasure.”

“ Ah ! there is many a heart-ache got pleasure going ; it is a bad job ; I don’t like it — and none of them like it — you know that, master Osman.”

I was very joyous, shook him by the hand, and sprung into the boat ; as I seated myself, and turned round, his look entirely unnerved me. He was of a very powerful make, and manly features. Tears, child’s tears, were running down his hardy cheeks, and he remained motionless, and looking after me, as one who stands near the closing grave of some well-beloved object.

For one brief moment, I felt as if I could have resigned my obstinate, unworthy will; as if I could have gone back to the home, where I was so loved, and never have left it more. It passed away, that slight emotion. 'Twas as the beseeching look of my better angel pitying me; but stronger were the demons near. They pointed to phantoms of delight, with syren whispers told of coming joys, and in a few minutes more I was leaning over the vessel's side as she floated gently down Southampton's lake-like water, with every sail set, and merely breeze enough to steady them.

With what a glorious deep solemnity did the sun set that never-forgotten, memorable evening — red was the sky — red the waters — red, fiery red, the walls, the castle tower, and the tall spires; black was the forest shore, and black the deep bosom of that wood, whence rose the ruins of old Netley Abbey, here, naked, gleaming red — there, purple, with its ivy man-

tle, and part lying in such dark and awful shadow, that I could not have landed there alone in my then mood.

It was all gray summer twilight as we neared and passed the small round castle of Calshot, standing far out, from the main land, on its narrow spit of land, like the roused and ready watch dog at his chain's length.

Silver bright were those tall, chalky, isolated cliffs, between the Isle of Wight and the shores of Lymington, called by old mariners "the Needles," when with a cooler, fresher breeze we scudded through the narrow passage, beneath a cloudless moon, and out upon the opener sea veered our free course.

My home behind — my hope before — I paced the deck in mingled musings of sorrow and of rapture; the first humiliating check to me was the creeping on of that strange enemy, that meanest foe — the sickness of the sea. I was staggering on the broad, smooth deck, while the young sea-boy was singing cheerily as he stood secure and steady upon the giddy footing of the high and rocking yard; all eyes around

were bright, as the vessel bounded merrily and swiftly over the buoyant waves — mine alone were dim ; their cheeks ruddy from the breeze, mine pale ; their spirits up, and minds awake — my heart heavy, without the power of indulging sadness ; my intellect confused, degraded—I seemed to suffer under a prostration of all strength, whether of mind or body. I was the finest animal man on board, yet a sucking babe were not more helpless ; the cultivated mind — the glowing genius — where were they ? What were they ? nothing, less than nothing to me, then. What a poor creature man is, if taken from his accustomed path ! the dauntless Arab on the tumbling sea, in a frail boat fast dipping to each wave ; the jovial mariner on a fiery steed flying with frightened, and frantic speed to the far desert — we feel humbled as we think of them. To the laughing counsels of the honest master I tried to give the laugh of thanks, but felt almost indifferent to life, so completely was I subdued. At length, in bitter pride, I strove with the disease—gained ground — grew cheerful — vain that I had con-

quered; and, ere two days were past, I was again all full delight.

We were now far out upon the dark blue waters of that restless bay, where the huge waves in their loud roarings seem as though they were instinct with life, and only yielded your small bark a passage, in obedience to a higher power than man's.

I was never tired with looking on them, as they rose in black mountain masses; then, suffering the wind to curl their white crests, broke into boiling foam.

'Tis beautiful, the ocean path — at all times beautiful — even when fear is at the highest, with those who sail upon the awful element; and when it smiles in summer loveliness, in calm or sunshine, what gentler scene in fair creation!

Thus thought I; thus I think; but as I lay by night in my small cabin, but as I felt the strong waves dashing against the planked barrier, that scarce seemed able to secure me from their sullen menace, methought I first suspected myself of fear. I cowered closer, and tried to hush it in a poor, unformed, and silent prayer.

I knew that I was not in the path of duty or obedience — felt half criminal — but I hushed the thought. — It passed away.

I slept, and dreamed a pleasant dream; of forest glades, and murmuring streams; of lying down in shady places; of the song of birds; of Edward — Edward with me smiling and fond.

A cry of wild alarm burst on my startled ear — a crashing sound — a violent groaning shock — and all was still.

Was it a rock? — Where were we? — Shipwreck? — Oh! horrid thought! — I gained the deck.

I was alone — alone on the dark, wild sea. I saw, by the moon's glimmer through a storm-cloud, another vessel driving before the gale — our rigging torn — our bowsprit broken. There was a mighty wind; it forced the fastenings of the sails; they blew out in ribbons to the gale, like the torn standards of the routed and the flying. The groanings and howlings of the blast among the cordage — the loud rattling of the loose and falling blocks — the violent striking of the tiller, as it flew to and fro, no longer go-

verned — the straining of the masts — 'twas more than dreadful — 'twas maddening. — No wonder that it seemed to me in that terrible hour as if the strong and rushing waves had voices — fierce, wild, and fearful voices, as of shouting, exulting pursuers. — Yes; there were spirits in that storm — in the wind, and on the wave. My fear had come — thus early come; and they were mocking.

I clung to the side of the companion with all my steadiness, and strength. The morning came; a reddish glimmer in the east; a dark scud above; the sea heavy and black, with thick far-blown showers of spray, flying wild from the tops of the curling billows.

The ship drove fast before the gale; the rudder torn away; the canvass gone; nothing to hold the furious wind, but the bending, straining masts, and the wailing cordage. The waves broke over the vessel repeatedly. Every sea that struck her I thought would be the last; that she would go to pieces, or suddenly upset and sink. — Still on she drove; though under her bare poles, fast bounded on the stormy billows.

My soaring dreams of the yesterday, where were they ? The terrors of the helpless Phaeton were mine — the fate of Icarus before me.

Towards evening there was a lull. The sky became one dim, misty gray ; the sea looked black.

The swell was as awful to my eye as the storm-lashed waves : now the ship rose on a hill (as it were) of water ; now, sunk into a deep dark valley of the element, as if about to be engulfed in it for ever.

I began now to feel the gnawings of hunger, and an eager thirst. Strange fate ! I was in the midst of plenty, yet had neither strength or skill to get at the water or provisions. A little biscuit, which had fallen on the cabin floor, and been trodden under dirty feet, and the moisture sucked from a half-dried watch-coat, relieved me greatly ; but I could not, dared not, remain below. The cabin seemed a tomb. I returned upon the deck, and, heaping clothes above me, slept.

I was awakened by a gentle hand ; the sun shone warm upon my dazzled eyes ; I was weak

and faint ; I could see nothing, but I heard my name uttered with a sad surprize, and by a well-known voice. The nephew of Somers stood beside me, and raised me in his young arms, and bade me cheer up.

Tears filled my dull eyes, and falling fast away, I was soon enabled to look on my deliverer. But how ? Where ? Whence had he come ? Was it a dream ? He pointed out to where, on the glittering ocean, lay a tall and stately ship in quiet, proud security.

“ What do you make of her, Sir ? ” called a stern, hoarse voice, through a speaking-trumpet.

Young Howard bade one of his seamen support me, and, catching up the trumpet from under our companion, replied briefly all I knew, and all he intelligently guessed.

“ She was run aboard, Sir, in the gale the other night, and her small crew deserted her, and got into the vessel that run foul of her.” *

* The reader has probably, and pardonably, decided that the supposed situation of an individual, left alone on board a vessel in a gale in the open sea, as described, is a fanciful and a silly invention of the Author. The realities of life do far outrun, in many things, the imaginations of men. The circumstance I have made use of occurred in 1818, and fell under my own observation.

He added that she was now in a sinking state, and the water almost bursting through her decks. Obeying the order of his commander, he made a short search for, and recovered, the papers of the master, also bade his coxswain get up a few things of mine from my cabin; then helping me to descend into his small boat with as much tenderness as if I had been a woman, we pulled away from the wreck. So severely had my nerves been tried, that as the vigorous sailors pulled strongly and with smiling eyes over the swelling bosoms of the lofty seas, I could scarcely persuade myself that I was saved; difficulties, dangers, and wonders seemed yet to threaten me. Soon, however, we came safely to the armed side of the frigate; soon I stood upon her oaken deck, and was led down to a cabin near her chief's, by his immediate order. I was followed by the surgeon, put to bed, something given to restore me, and left to rest and silence. In all my chill terrors, during the storm, I could not pray; but here, my thanksgivings burst from me in a full flood of grateful tears, and in low, broken, fervent ejaculations.

The following morning I awoke, after a long sound sleep, quite recovered, and was sent for by the captain. He received me with a kind, but calm cordiality. He had learned all concerning me from Howard, whom I begged to see. He was sent for; and when I saw him stand at the cabin door, with his hat held low in his hand, pausing for permission to enter, I abruptly rose, and flew eagerly to embrace him. "Be calm, Mr. Beavoir, be calm," said the captain; "Mr. Howard, you may go." It was in vain I would have detained him; in vain I spoke.

"Sir, I don't like scenes. Your fine feelings, Sir, destroy men's usefulness. Howard is the manliest boy in my ship."

"Recollect, Sir, I owe him my life."

"No, Sir, you owe it to the care and mercy of God, and I trust that you will not soon forget it; we are all apt, too apt, indeed, to give him the second place in our affections and our thanks. Young Howard did but his duty, Sir, and would have done as much by a coop of my fowls."

Rebuked, as I felt, I could not look on the

speaker without respect and interest. He was about fifty years of age; his hair perfectly white, and gathered in a queue; his face deeply wrinkled; a scar on his cheek; a yet deeper one on his forehead; his complexion that dark ruddiness peculiar to those who pass their lives at sea; the left sleeve of his coat hung loosely looped upon his breast, in itself a decoration; and he had the fine eye, the full limb, and the firm tread of a brave commander.

We had no sooner finished breakfast, than he asked me to follow him on deck. It was a Sunday morning. Here, under an awning, a part of which was formed by spare colours, all the officers and crew were collected aft for divine service.

He read the prayers appointed in a plain manly way, with such clear, but quiet emphasis, as denoted a sincere veneration for his God, a heart interest in religion. I felt that all eyes were on me; and, when I raised mine, the scene impressed me as one of peculiar grandeur and solemnity. The brown, weather-beaten features of the hardy sailors; their bare heads and brave

bearing ; the long loose locks of hair that blew on, or from, their manly cheeks ; and the stained hues cast on them by the red, blue, and yellow colours above, formed a noble picture. The strange contrast, too, to the village church was not only in this grouping ; but the deep sound of the rough quartermasters' voices, as, with their hoarse directing cry to the answering steersmen, it mingled with, or rose above, the prayers ; the watch, forward on the forecastle, ready to rein in any sudden coming gale ; and all this upon the restless rocking wave, did wonderfully impress me. I felt grateful, secure ; and offered fervent thanks for my deliverance, though I could hardly name or think of it without a shuddering remembrance of its horrors.

Delightful as was this feeling of security after danger ; novel and interesting as it was to observe the perfect order, stern silence, and prompt obedience of so many fellow-creatures subjected to one individual will ; still there was much that oppressed, much that humbled me. The captain, though kind in his treatment, was sparing of words, and his looks were generally grave. If

a slight smile ever crossed his features, it was bestowed on some rough old seaman, as he passed him by, or on some fearless active boy, as he was nimbly running up the rigging for his hour's look out from the mast head. I felt that I was an idle cypher, and that I was so regarded. At table, the officers who came there by invitation (among the rest young Howard, asked out of courtesy to me) sate constrained and silent; not that they appeared to dislike their commander; far from it; there was a something in the lighting up of their eyes when he addressed them, that bespoke a respect for him and a regard. You might have sworn that they were cheerful in their obedience to him, and would, at any time, have hazarded their lives in defence of his person; but the rules and customs of their service were as chains round nature.

Few lives are more sad than that solitary sultan-like isolation of the commander of a ship of war.

The few days I was on board passed exactly like each other. There was no talking on the deck; little in the cabin. I scarcely ever found

an opportunity of speaking to young Howard; and seldom saw him, except at those moments when he was engaged in cheerily performing his duty.

It was with a pleasure, not unlike that I felt when it was first told me at home that I had permission to go abroad, that I now heard the cry of "Land !"

The Rock of Lisbon (at which port it chanced the frigate was to call), was in sight from the mast head; and its fine, cloudy, outline was soon visible from the deck.

We ran into the harbour by night. I was in bed before we entered, but too restless to sleep well; and I remember hearing the old captain's voice naming his wife and children. I knew from the tone that it was in prayer. Husband and father — the high, the happy privileges of those endearing titles kept me yet longer wakeful. It was near the morning watch before I closed my eyes; and then I was disturbed by a dream.

Again, I was clinging to the mast in the abandoned vessel — again, the howling wind was

sounding in my ears; but oh! how horridly different were the sights around.

The sky was lightning — lightning — not flashing, but fixed ; — one wide and awful sheet of bluish flame. The seas were glassily transparent, though mountains high; while crowded beneath the surface of the waters multitudes of the long-drowned dead rose rushingly from their chilly resting-places. Livid the corpses were; yet they looked and swam with open eyes, and the action of the living. All looked on me — all called upon my name. In bubbling murmurs, in hissing whisperings, “Osman!” a million times repeated, was sounded in my ear.

How long could I have endured this? I awoke in terror. There was no sound but the gentle sucking of the rippling tide ; and, through the half-opened door, I saw the statue-like sentinel with watchful protecting eye.

I soon became composed. I dressed. I prayed that I might conquer, and forget these terrors. I feared that the memory of them would hang over my dearly-purchased feast of joy like the tyrant's sword. I examined myself; and seemed

to feel that my sin was, after all, a very light, a venial one; that it had already, and severely been punished, and that I might now enjoy myself happily, innocently; that to dwell on gloomy thoughts of death was not natural to man — was foolish, useless, wrong: with a heart much lightened, I went upon the deck.

What a scene presented itself to my dazzled eye! We lay in a broad, tranquil river, 'mid a large fleet of ships at rest. Their lofty, carved, and highly gilded sterns; their painted prows; their silken streamers; their sails all closely furled on the black yards, or hanging idly in festoons; a thousand boats of forms and colours strange, with white or striped awnings, and oarsmen standing, and singing as they rowed — these things were new and beautiful. But when I turned, and saw a city on the shore, rising all loftily in beauteous pride, with towers and palaces, domes, and fair fronts of temples, surmounted with the cross; and, all around these nobler features, the white and crowded dwellings of many thousands of my fellow-beings —

here, gay with light balconies and green vespertines — there, displaying on their terraced roofs small gardens, as it were, of plants ; and marked, where, near the castle, on the higher ground, there rose with tall, bending, yet stately stem, one solitary palm, I felt the measure of my transport full.

How very bright all objects looked in the rich flood of the strong sun-light ! — to me, too, who had just come from the shady retirement of the forest.

The Captain pressed my hand with great kindness at parting, and I returned the pressure with gratitude. From young Howard I parted as from a brother. It was not, however, with the less of joy that I quitted the vessel, and was rowed to the steps of a handsome and thronged square, whence I was conducted by a Gallician porter to the residence of the Conde de Alegrete, in the Rua de San Bento. My walk, in spite of a few dirt-heaps, was one long sensation of delighted and ill-repressed surprize ; the bare-footed Franciscan with his shaven crown ; the brown-throated, black-eyed, white-teethed peo-

ple in their novel garbs; the many negroes, with black, shining faces, and curly heads; the half-concealed faces of the veiled women; the gentry in their cocked hats and long chin-covering cloaks; the gilded caleças, and the tall, stout, shining mules; the market asses, and their jingling bells; the rude and creaking bullock-cars; and around, the voices, and the din of labour, cheerful labour; while, rising above all these sounds, might be heard the incessant tinkling of the small chimes, which, in that country, till the hour of noon, give constant warning of the ever-ready Mass.

The Conde received me with unaffected pleasure, promised to make my stay as agreeable as he could; and, after cordial enquiries for Colonel Hamilton, and listening with grave surprise to the rapidly told tale of my late misfortune, and merciful preservation, he led me to the apartment I was to occupy during my stay, and left me to myself. It was about ten o'clock in the forenoon. Every thing in the house—the furniture, the attendance, the customs,—was so totally different from what I had left behind me, that per-

haps, had I arrived in the depth of winter, I should have felt little satisfaction in the change ; but it was the first week in September — the weather intensely hot, and every thing around seemed to have an air of the most studied and luxurious preparation to endure it with the least possible inconvenience. The chamber was very spacious, and paved with those broad, thin, adorned bricks, so common among the ruins of Moorish palaces ; three large windows, lofty above, and descending to the floor, looked towards the Tagus ; at this hour they were flung open inwards, the green venetians being carefully closed ; and far out over the balcony, there hung slanting down thick blinds of coarse texture, kept constantly wetted from above by a negro boy.

The bed was very high, and very broad. From a coronetted canopy of white damask silk, depended mosquito curtains of aa white gauze, fine as if the spider had woven it ; the mattresses were light and firm, receiving no indent from the frame ; the sheets of the very finest cotton, with very broad flounces of India mus-

lin; the pillows low, round, and flounced in like manner; a richly embroidered satin quilt. The fixture wall-tables of white marble were supported by griffin claws, carved and gilt; the heavy chairs with white damask, and gilding to correspond; broad mirrors shone dark and cool above the tables, in rich, costly frames; and the walls of the apartment were hung with a tapestry so beautifully vivid as to realize the colourings of Arabian Fable—trees, fruits, flowers, birds—all bright, and gaudy as they are in sunny climes. Adjoining this chamber, was a small closet bath, floored with marble, and provided with large brimming waterpots ever ready to pour over the exhausted frame. On a stand of ebony in the chamber was an ewer, and basin of silver; and beneath many small narrow-necked vessels of a porous clay filled with cool water. I am particular in calling up the picture of all these things, because we are certainly often acted upon by the circumstances, in which we are placed; and very trifles, as adjuncts, operate through our senses on the moral tone of the feelings, and have some influence on our conduct.

Above all things luxury breaks down the strength, if not of our principle, at least of its resisting power.

Here was I, with less experience of the world than a boy trundling a hoop among his playfellows. With an imagination all fire—a heart swelling and impressible—a face, and form, and figure inherited from a father lofty in his stature, strong yet faultless in his symmetry, and having himself the black eye, and prominent nose of manly beauty, to which in me was added the mouth and smile of a mother, whose countenance was ever full of sweetness and expression. Here was I, abandoned to my own weak reason and strong will. It far less frequently happens that they, who rough it among their fellows as boys, and see life early, feel, or allow themselves to form, a false and ill-placed attachment, than those, who, coming late, and ignorant into the world, are exposed suddenly to the fierce assaults of passion from without, and know not, or forget that they bear in their own ardent bosoms, enemies under the semblance of friends, ever treacherous, and ever

ready to betray them. To return — a black servant brought, and placed upon the marble slab, a salver with chocolate, fruits, and ices, and left the room, telling me that the hour of his master's dinner was at noon. I bared my throat, loosened my dress, threw myself on the bed, and lay indulging in that passive indolence of thought, which has its pleasures; but, alas! its dangers also. Thousands of images passed confusedly through my fancy, none fixing it; they were all bright as the colours on the tapestry round me, but none distinct. Suddenly a sound, I had never before heard, reached me — a vibrating sound of deep rich melody; now, lighter and sweeter were the tones; again, deep and full: a harp — certain I felt, it was a harp — there was no measure — no continued strain — a mere touching of the harmonious strings. I arose and hastened to the window, but, fearing to discover myself, just looked through the venetians. At right angles with the Conde's Mansion, was another of like size and aspect; and I readily distinguished the windows of the chamber, whence the sounds

proceeded. A garden lay below, belonging to that mansion; it was empty, hot, and still; I went out into the balcony and gazed vainly at that chamber; its venetians were fast closed; the outer blind down; nothing could I see; the sounds ceased. I felt disappointed and sad; nay, fearful I was myself the cause of their ceasing.

I returned to my couch, and to fresh musings — the harp was in them now. In about half an hour again the chords were struck, but I thought with more intention.

A low plaintive prelude was very touchingly executed, and followed by an air so fondly, softly, tenderly sad, that it pierced my very soul. The words I could not distinguish, but the ravishing melody of tone, the feeling turns and pauses, and the faint warblings of the dying, the slowly dying close left me in an ecstasy. Where was it gone? — that sound of sweetness? Above? yes, up, up — surely up from earth; 'twas incense for the skies, yet had some mortal breathed it. Ah me! I had not been three short-lived hours, upon a foreign shore, and I had already drunk a

luscious draught of that Circean cup, which is ever drugged with poisons for our peace.

At the hour of noon I was summoned to the repast; all was novelty enough to stir and kindle a colder fancy than mine. As the Conde and myself were taking our seats at table, there glided in with noiseless step, a pale old monk, in the white habit of his order; he placed himself opposite to the Conde, uttered a short Latin grace, and sunk down into his chair in silence. I was introduced to him, and acknowledged by a kind smile of quiet welcome. My food was forgotten as I looked on this strange, grave figure: the small peaked beard of thin grey hairs, the little black skull-cap, the rude cord around his loins, the rosary in his hand, the sandal on his foot. I looked on all these things with a reverential feeling. This was somewhat increased by its being a day of fast; and although neither the Count himself, or father Antonio had anything in their bearing to me of the bigot, yet the very circumstance of observing that there were dishes prepared ex-

pressly for me, and pressed on my attention, disconcerted and almost depressed me.

Of the five servants in attendance, three were negroes, two elderly Portuguese with parchment faces, lean, snuff-taking noses, and that snuffling voice and nasal tone, so disagreeable a peculiarity with most of the aged vulgar in that country. They glanced down on my heretically filled plate with a ludicrous expression of mingled disapprobation and envy; but the hospitable eagerness of the Count to meet what he knew to be the custom of my country, and the licence of my persuasion, quite relieved me. The Count was a short man, with a very sallow, suffering complexion, of delicate health and gentle manners; his eye penetrating and expressive, his voice never loud, and very mellow. Father Antonio was of a very sad, subdued, interesting appearance. The table was quite a new picture to me. The plate was all chased, and adorned with scriptural subjects; the bread was served in small rude shaped loaves, some of which were of a bright yellow colour, being made of India corn; the

wine was in very large-bellied bottles, of a glass transparent, but of a deep green colour; the oil stood on the table in narrow rush-covered flasks. We drank our wine in large glasses of goblet size, diluting it with iced water. The pine, the melon, and the large purple grapes were disposed on dishes of silver, as the painter would groupe them. In the centre of the table stood an elegant little ornament of silver, representing the porcupine, fretful and bristling; tooth picks of the most fragrant sandal-wood, supplying the tiny and harmless quills: while in a corner of the saloon were silver basins and ewers, with snowy napkins hanging over them, ready to carry at the close of the meal to each guest. It may be supposed that my late adventure and miraculous deliverance, formed the principal subject of conversation, and my host and the good father won on me by their kindness of manner, and the calm quiet easiness of their general discourse. We conversed in French; then, as now, that language being among all educated foreigners, the medium of communication in society. Fortunately, with

Vernon, Colonel Hamilton, my father and mother, I had practised myself in learning to speak French, as a happy pastime and useful attainment. I spoke it well, and, indeed, had a very considerable acquaintance with all the continental languages.

Soon after we had finished our repast, the Count led the way to a gallery, a large window at the end of which looked out upon the glorious river, and for half an hour we paced very gently to and fro. During this time he took occasion to give me a rapid insight into the manner of a Lisbon life, and to express his regret that his dull residence was so ill suited to my years and spirits.

“My lazy countrymen,” said he, “neither walk or ride farther than to mass, the café, or the theatre; but you will find a horse always at your order; a boat, when you are inclined to go upon the river; and a carriage ready every evening at the hour of the opera, where I shall have pleasure in accompanying you, for it is one of the few amusements to which, in my old age, I retain an undiminished attachment.

As for other recreations or exercises, I shall have pleasure in being your guide to the few things worth visiting among us ; but there are many of your own countrymen, and other foreigners here, whose age and pursuits will better fit them to be your companions." To this I replied naturally and politely. The quiet father and himself now left me to retire for their siesta, and I was again restored to my dangerous solitude.

I did not leave the couch of my waking dreams till the cool of the evening, and then I went upon the roof of the house. Delightfully fragrant were the choice, healthy, well-watered plants, and shrubs, which stood ranged, in long rows, in large adorned flower pots of vase-like forms ; the prospect of the shipping, and the Tagus ; of the opposite shores of Almada, with its vineyards and orange gardens ; of the quays below me, crowded with people ; and those sounds which belong to the hour when labour breaks off from his daily task of toil, and wipes his sweaty brow ; and which come up in a pleasant contented hum upon the ear ;

all gave me that feeling of enjoyment, which is the superior pleasure of mind. How dearly purchased, alas ! many weepers there be that but too well, too sadly know.

The sun set — the dusky light of eve soon followed it ; night, all beautiful in her gorgeous robe of deep but starry blue, canopied the black earth. I should not, could not, at this hour of life, leave the hushed, silent, awful companionship of golden stars for lighted theatres ; but then I answered gaily to the summons, and stepping into the mule-drawn caleça, was soon conveyed to the grand theatre. There were few in Europe to compare with it at that period ; to me, however, this was nothing. I had never seen a theatre, never heard an opera, could draw therefore no comparisons, exercise no discriminating judgment. — I could do better — could enjoy. Things were so conducted in that theatre, that the whole house lay in deep shadow, while a full and brilliant light was cast upon the scene. The orchestra was admirably filled, and you heard not a twang, a scrape, or a note, till the

overture burst forth in all its stirring strength. —It was a hunting piece, and told its joyous, animating scenes as well or better than could pen or pencil.

The prancing forth — the rousing of the game — the maddening, yet gleeful speed of the hot chase; the mellow death horn — the triumphant return — the laughing feast; your ear listened, and your mind's eye saw the whole. Then came the pause — the breathless pause to those, who, for the first time, visit a theatre; the heavy curtain slowly updrawn — the discovered scene — the chill air that came from it — the appearance of the characters — the stage dresses — the developement of the acted story — the brilliant recitative — the swelling chorus — the passionate, the soft breathed airs: how all these trifles enchanted me! Forgetful, ignorant indeed of the usages of the place, I leaned far out from the Count's box, fearful lest I should miss one word, a gesture, or one bar of music. It was a common tale of love. Wealth striving to win a maiden's heart, or rather person. The per-

suasions, counsels, and menaces of frosty age; a playful proving of the best loved swain — his jealous fears of his dazzling rival — the lover's quarrel — the forgiving fond embrace.

So complete was the witchery of the music — so beautiful the singing, that the illusion was perfect, at least to the ear. My soul hung with a feverish delight on the sweet sounds. In one scene in particular, I remember the true maid brought in her fine apparel, the gift of the rich suitor, and, casting it on the ground, trod on it indignantly; then, sung an air all soft reproach, and tender seeking, and her lover came to her fond call, and she fell upon his bosom, and sobbed there in the happy, murmuring tones of reconciliation. That air was not new to me — the harp, the closed chamber, the unknown syren, all flashed upon me. I struck my forehead with the action of passionate, rapturous remembrance, and turned my eyes suddenly from the stage; they were met by the inquiring gaze of a lady of surpassing beauty, but with an air of sad contemplation, as of one who had found it a fatal gift; her

veiled eyelids instantly fell, as it were with a sense of pain, and she pressed them nervously, as endeavouring to chase away some thought or image that disturbed her. She then looked up again, and directing all her attention to the stage, seemed to notice me no farther.

The shade of the house was sufficient to conceal and favour the observing gaze, while so near as I sat to the object of it, it could not disappoint me by hiding her charms; nay, it rather threw them out into a fuller, richer relief, as is the case in the portraits of the best and oldest masters. Her form was tall and majestic, but yet femininely so; she had that ample bosom of matronly beauty, where the breasts are widely parted, and swell to a gentle fulness: the white and rounded arm of perfect proportion. Her graceful neck rose stately from fine-falling shoulders, a faint carnation hue just tinged a cheek, the complexion of which was pale and transparent. Her nose had that delicately marked prominence, those thin nostrils, and that flexible expression so rare and so admired. Her eyes were dark, large, lus-

trous, and yet languid, veiled by white blue-veined lids, and fringed with such eye lashes as I never saw on any other; around her beauteous mouth there were no smiles, but you could trace where, in youth, there had been.

Her robe was white; the folds of the drapery large; above her high pale forehead her dark hair was smoothly parted, without a curl; and she wore round her head a wreath of black laurel-shaped leaves; her long, white mantle-like veil hung down from the back part of her head, and fell carelessly and gracefully over her shoulders, giving an air of inexpressible dignity to her whole figure.

She looked like the sad priestess of some ruined temple of Hymen, in which the altar had been overthrown and broken, and the torch extinguished for ever: and it was so. Her husband, a nobleman of Sicily, had married her for her beauty; a stern guardian was said to have planned, and compelled her to this marriage. Two children she had borne her unworthy lord, but they were dead. Twelve years she had been married.

Her husband thought of nothing but the gaming table, and she was an admired, pitied, secluded, neglected woman. They had been residing here for the last twelve months, the Prince Belmonte being attached to the Neapolitan embassy. This much I gathered hastily from the old Count, my host, given as the "on dit" of society. I looked again at her, and felt some strange confusion, when I thought of the harp and the voice. Could it be? it might—it must have been some lovely person. Could it be she? Oh no: I had a fear, and yet a hope within me. I wanted my invisible syren to prove some one I might love; some virgin girl, with heart all in its sighing freshness; but yet, how beautiful, how very beautiful was this fair melancholy wife. What were the friendship of such a being worth? Worth many loves.

It was with a swift flight of fancy that I seemed already to be the privileged listener to her whispered sorrows, and dreamed that such pity could be innocent.

I could not, would not trust myself to ask the Count where she resided, and clung strangely to

the fancy, that she it was to whose enchanting voice I had listened with much deep emotion.

We returned home; the Count soon retired to his chamber, and I to the terraced roof, to enjoy the soft air, and the clear calming darkness of the still night.

All was repose around me; but, alas! not within. Why do I say alas? Then my feeling was far different. Then I loved that tumult of the bosom. I leaned from the balustrade, and looked eagerly down upon the windows of that chamber where I thought this being of enchantment surely dwelt. They were open. A female sate solitary at one of them. The lamp burning in the apartment showed nothing save that her robe was white, and her figure tall; and it cast down a gleam upon a gilded harp.

Three hours, or more, I watched with that heart-heaving intensity with which the lover watches; but they glided fast away. The lamp began to burn feebly; the night wind blew chill; and she, on whom I was gazing, and who had sate moveless, arose, and disappeared.

I went down to my couch disappointed, and

felt, as I lay me down for the night, that care was on my pillow.

The morning came ; again I was early up, and out in my balcony, and gazing at the window, and I saw the lady of my fancied love come forth ; but judge my astonishment. She came careless and smiling, with unbraided hair, and an elderly duenna following ; and she was gaily throwing back her white arms to catch those long, thick, wanton tresses, and bind them up again.

Her voice I heard — her features I looked upon. No ; they were not the tones I listened for. Those eyes and lips had beauties, but not the charms I sought. She no sooner discovered me than she seemed greatly surprised ; but soon the expression of her countenance changed to free delight ; and, after the custom of the silly, prisoned women of that land, she gave those glances of the sparkling eye, those gestures of the playful hand, that challenge the bold wooer.

My heart had deeper wants. I was young,

joyous, excited, but as yet innocent. I laughed indeed, and kissed my hand, but went as from a forbidden thing within.

I found from the servant, who waited on me, that this was the married daughter of a wealthy merchant, and that her husband had lately sailed to the Brazils.

“ Was she musical ? Did she play the harp ? ”

“ Oh ! yes ; a brave Signora for every thing.”

Thus, then, said I, are we men fooled ! That air — that tone, was hers ; and the midnight musing hers ; and the morning tone again was hers ; and the glance and the beckon hers ; and her husband far away on tempest-tossed seas ! Riddle, deceitful riddle ; — sing, smile, deck, and perfume thy carved bed ; I’ll none of your false love.

Thus thought I, and spake bitterly, and proudly to myself — still, as the beauteous image of her whom I had seen at the opera, arose before me, I felt less merit in resistance — less strength than I was early boasting. Yet why ? She, she was all sorrow and virtue. Thoughts of sin and of her could never dwell together in my bosom.

The Count took me in his carriage that morning to visit our envoy, some native and foreign noblemen, and a few of the most considerable merchants ; by all of whom I was very kindly received.

“ And the Prince of Belmonte, are we going to call there ? ” I ventured to ask.

No : he resided in the country ; the Count scarce knew where ; and, indeed, was very slightly acquainted with him.

The more obstacles which seemed placed between me and the acquaintance that I felt I most passionately desired to form, the more restless and invincible became my wishes. It was in vain that I was surrounded by so many new and interesting objects.

I visited the many-shrined churches — the dull and cloistered convents — the grated nunneries ; — I walked in the vineyards, and stammered out greetings with the laughing vine-dressers ; — I lay down in the orange gardens, and sprinkled my open bosom with the cool waters of the bubbling fountains ; — I rode in the Campo Grande ; — I sailed on the beautiful river,

and fed my delighted eye with the gay aspect of the varied shore, where green gardens, white villas, and gray monasteries, were scattered for many miles up the yellow waters.

I stood, at evening, in the streets, and listened as the people gathered round the picture or image of some favourite saint, and sung a litany or the vesper hymn. I took my ice on the bench before the door of the coffee house, and heard, with an indolent pleasure, the sounds of the guitar and the castanet, and the plaintive ballads of their wandering musicians. I was regular at the opera. I read Portuguese daily with the kind father Antonio, and our little repast at noon was increasingly cheerful, as our intimacy grew closer. The envoy, the consul, and the English gentlemen invited me to their tables. They had evening parties; there were many ladies; several unmarried, with the fresh roses and ready smiles of the gay dance-loving age. I drank freely from the wine cup, and was interested and animated over the table talk, and I danced gaily among the others of my age; but of those men none interested my heart as a

friend : of those women not one warmed me into an admirer. The very moment I was restored to myself I was full of aching wants and vain wishes ; yet had I nothing, however I might try to disguise it to myself, with the pursuit of which my principles or my sense could reconcile me. The woman whose image was continually present to me, was another's — another's by the most sacred and solemn of all ties ; was of a character moreover distinguishedly superior to most of her Italian countrywomen, for she had never yielded, even in courtesy, to the vile custom of *cicisbeism* — a circumstance, it was said, which, instead of being the fruit of her base lord, was viewed by him, according to his moods, with an angry scorn, or with the keenest ridicule. Hence her seclusion was almost monastic. Regular inquiries I was not hardy enough to make — the art we so soon learn, of putting chance and careless questions on matters that deeply move us, I had practised in vain. I could not discover where she lived. Alas ! all this was wild, and wrong — it bore the fruit of sin ; although, as far as she was concerned, I thought

only of the romantic interest of looking in her eyes, gazing on her fair form, and listening to her dulcet voice : but the vain wishing, and the deferred joy, as they troubled my solitary hours, so did they unstring all moral nerve within me.

There is never any necessity for man laying bare those errors of early life by some exulted in, by others laughed at, by more, better and larger classes, mourned. Few, very few, men walk the ordeal of early life without treading on the burning ploughshare ; well is it for those whose consciences the iron does not sear.

All cities have the taking eyelids, the flattering of the lips, the voice of invitation in the twilight ; a demon is ever near the idle and the indolent, and he smiles when he sees the simple victim caught, and kissed, and led down to the chambers of death. Ah ! my forest home, you never saw the strong drink mingled — you never heard the shout of revelry — you never listened to the seductive song, or gazed upon the wanton dance of the falsely-smiling, warm-embracing but cold heart-broken harlot—most wretched of all the wretched ! I mean not to speak of you

in the tone of contempt ; it is man — your betrayer man — who has always “much heavier guilt and much lighter woe.” — Well for those who, in the protected paths and calm duties of a private and retired life, tread surely, surrounded by restraining mercies. Better yet for those who are early taught where to get the only armour proof against invisible darts, which are tempered in a lake of fire.

It was with joy that I heard the proposal of the Count to leave the city, and pass a few weeks at a quinta of his near Cintra. It seemed as if I had escaped from the tyrannous grasp of polluting fiends, when I stood again alone in the deep shadow of woods—when I heard the murmur of brooks, and the song of birds — when I climbed the naked rock to see the sun rise, or watched him sinking in his ocean bed. I loved to look upon the black cypress-tree, which, in Portugal, grows up of a stately beauty like the cedar of Lebanon. The gnarled branches and the white deeply-furrowed bark of the cork-tree ; the vines in the quinta gardens here trelliced, there hanging from branch to branch,

in wild irregular festoons: these were all objects for the picturesque loving eye; innocent food for it; while the distant song of the water-drawing peasant girl, the bell of the browsing goat, or the mellow chimes, which came down on the mountain breeze from the lofty convent, soothed me into feelings of peace, sad, indeed, but sweetly sad.

As I was returning late one evening from a long delicious ramble, I struck into a path which I guessed would lead in the direction of the Count's quinta, but which I had never before trodden. It was the twilight hour; no longer were objects distinctly seen, and the thickness of the wood made my path still darker; a calm, a breathless stillness reigned all around. I paused, as in doubt whether to proceed or trace back my way, and return by the public road. Suddenly a harp note struck on the tremulous air; the mere vibration caused a quick thrill to run through my every vein — to shake my every nerve. Again I heard the faint, low prelude of sweet promise, the tender melancholy air,

the well-remembered voice of melting melody. — I listened with mute, intense, painfully intense interest, holding my breath, which would have panted loud — my every faculty wound up. It ceased: I listened on—to nothing. I felt my heart too full—I felt it ache, sink, sicken;— my blood chilled, my brain swam round. What sound I uttered, whether faint sigh, or loud exclaim, I know not. What time elapsed I know not; but, at length, to the gentle pressure of a soft hand, that chafed my pale forehead, I opened my dull, dim eye. — Was it?—yes;— she of the sad, fair beauty — she, the once-seen, stood over me with a look of womanly compassion: no sooner did she observe me to recover, than addressing herself with some directions to those around, she left the apartment. It was a garden pavilion. I lay stretched upon a low ottoman; an elderly female attendant and two men-servants stood beside me: the former took the place of her mistress by my couch, while the men remained with their hats in hand, evidently for the purpose of assisting me home, when sufficiently recovered. “It was not far,”

they said, "through the wood — a very short league. Their mistress had given orders for my safe and easy conveyance, and the gentle baudet, whereon she rode daily in the grounds, would carry me home with their support, with little more inconvenience or fatigue than a litter or chair."

I felt my strength very quickly return; but long and vainly I lingered in the indulged hope that she might again visit the pavilion. How my eye drank in the pleasure reflected from gazing round me as I lay — the magic harp — the seat so lately quitted — the small and delicate plants, which seemed expressly chosen, for that their frail and beautiful flowers were the short-lived blossoms of one summer day; — the book too — the opened book; — I took it up, and looked upon the page she had last read from: — I started; — it was a Shakspeare; of Queen Katherine's high sorrow she was reading, and my eyes seized the sad lines: —

"Shipwrecked upon a kingdom where no pity,
No friends, no hope; no kindred weep for me;
Almost no grave allow'd me: — like the lily

That once was mistress of the field and flourished,
I'll hang my head and perish."

I will pity thee, said my quick-beating heart --
will be to thee friends, hope, kindred -- be the
cold grave forgotten.

"Go," said I aloud to one of the attendants,
"tell your lady that I feel sufficiently recovered to be able to proceed alone, and shall only require your services to point out to me the direction of my path; but say, that I hope for permission to be allowed to express to her my thanks, for her kind hospitality, in person."

He went, but almost immediately returned.
"The Signora is well pleased to hear that the Cavalier is so far recovered; but must insist on her arrangement for his return being yielded to. She is happy in having rendered him the slight service, for which he is desirous of thanking her in person; is sorry that, from the lateness of the hour, she cannot have the pleasure of receiving him, and bids him God speed."

I listened eagerly, but disappointedly, to every syllable of the message; rose silently, looked round the little temple of her solitude with that searching gaze with which we fix a locality for ever in our memory, and went forth slowly and reluctantly.

A large sized gentle baudet of the breed of Barbary, with saddle and housings of green velvet, and embroidered rein, stood ready for me, and the two attendants armed, and bearing torches, took their stations one before, the other by my side.

We had not gone a full mile from the villa when I heard the sudden clashing of swords, and loud cries for help, at a very short distance. The servants with me were greatly alarmed, overcome with unmanly apprehensions, and begged of me to turn back. Their requests and remonstrances, however, did but indistinctly reach me, for already was I urging my beast out of its patient amble to its quickest pace and best speed in the direction of the cry.

Against the huge trunk of an aged cork-tree

of the wildest outline, I caught the figure of a man defending himself stoutly against three assailants. The clear darkness of the deep blue starlight sky, showed me the active motions, the glittering swords, and the sparks that flew from them; while the alternate calls on saint and devil bespoke the resolute bearing of the assaulted gentleman. Throwing myself among the combatants, I was in an instant by his side, and the foiled bandits, after one of them had discharged a pistol, the shot of which (the first I had ever heard by the way), flew with a spitting whiz close, but harmlessly, past my naked head, left us with a loud volley of curses, and made off in an opposite direction from the slowly advancing torches.

“ My thanks to you, gentle Sir, for your bold help,” said the Stranger, as he leaned exhausted and almost breathless upon his sword. “ The villains had well nigh overpowered me; three to one were heavy odds in their favour. These sort of gentlemen don’t want courage to cut a throat for the sake of carrying off a well-filled purse; — my thanks, Signor.” I replied

briefly ; but judge my astonishment, when in the person of him whom I had delivered in this strange rencontre, I discovered, by the recognition and obeisance of the servants, who now came doubtingly forward, the Prince Belmonte, the husband of that beauteous being who had so disturbed my young heart.

I eagerly examined him. Tall, noble-looking, handsome ; elegant both in his person and countenance. As he recovered himself, a kind of cold hauteur, a polished calmness spread over every feature, and was observable in every, even the slightest movement of the limb, or hand ; a look of that quiet surprise, which requires to be informed, but indifferent as to the issue, indicated to me the necessity of giving some explanation for being found at midnight on the road leading from his villa, with the animal which his wife generally used to take exercise on, and attended by his own servants. I briefly stated to him that, after a day of great heat and fatigue, I had been overtaken by a fainting sickness near the gate of his garden, and succoured by his lady's order ;

and I closed by expressing my great pleasure that Providence had enabled me so soon and so agreeably to repay in part the obligation conferred.

He appeared much struck by the animation of my manner, for he said instantly, that he rejoiced at any circumstance that had given him the opportunity of making my acquaintance, and still more to find that I was a neighbour.

As danger was evidently abroad, he insisted that I should return with him, and pass the remainder of the night at the villa. We accordingly prepared to retrace our steps; a wound in the fleshy part of the thigh, which he had not felt at the moment, and in the heat of his late encounter, now became stiff, and painful. I bound it up, and placing him on the baudet, supported his limb with my hand, as we moved slowly back towards the mansion. It appeared from what he now told me, that he had been returning from Lisbon alone, on horseback, and having called on a friend, who resided near the palace of Queluz, was induced to stay till the late hour, in which he so im-

prudently ventured on, and was beset by the robbers. They had seized his horse by the bridle, and he had jumped off, made for the tree, and placing his back against it, had determined to sell his life dearly, and had successfully kept his ground till I so opportunely joined him. If to me all this was strange, confused, and exciting, what proved it to the lady Agatha?

In a full and sweeping night robe, with her head bound close (as for the grave), a broad white fillet passing tight across her brow, pale, very pale, yet beautiful, as if she was a love-worn woman, widowed by absence and neglect, she came down from her chamber with a taper in her hand, to learn the cause of our return, and of the confusion below. Her earnest attentions were immediately given to the care and comfort of her husband, while she thanked me in a most courteous, lady-like manner, but with a tone, which my quick and ready fears deemed full of a sad regret, that my acquaintance was thus in a manner forced upon her.

It was with the smile of a relieved mind that she listened as I bade herself and her

lord good night, adding that with early dawn I must return to the Count, who would, no doubt, be under considerable anxiety for my safety. The Prince begged me to consider his villa as always open to me; and though he said the Princess saw no company, he was sure that of one, who had been introduced so singularly on that evening to them both, would be ever welcome. She gave a silent assenting bend, and I withdrew.

Most freely I gave myself to enjoy that precious privilege. He was confined to a sofa for some weeks: daily I visited him: I informed him of such news as I gathered from the Count; I played with him at chess, at cards; I did every thing to make myself agreeable in his sight, that I might be ensured the bliss, the innocent bliss as I thought it, of being near the lady Agatha.

Very, very seldom did she address herself to me, and then in a quiet, polite, but reserved manner.

It became evident to me that she saw; evident

that she desired to check those sentiments of admiration, which, while I delightedly indulged in them, I vainly flattered myself I might successfully conceal.

The Prince was blind to all these emotions, which betrayed my secret to her; for his heart was as cold and unfeeling as the marble-looking fine hand with which he guided the pieces on the chess-board. To his wife he had an air of indifferent, smiling politeness, as he sate at table, which might easily deceive the heartless, uninterested observer; me it could not. This treasure of charms — this mind — this heart — ah! no — that was not his — it could not be. The affections never will be mocked. She was submissive with that proud womanly devotion which scorns the display, or even the admission of her misery; which would spurn away the offered consolation of those male coquettes, who watch the moment to flatter and betray. No; she did not, could not, love him — could not respect him. She sighed (but it was in secret), and she endured him well.

His liking for, and attentions to me were every

marked, and, for him I imagine, must have been unusually cordial. His conversation was lively, elegant, and, at times, attractive; but in vain he sought to recommend himself to me. I hated him for his treatment of his wife, and soon I found that I envied him; too soon, alas! that I coveted his possession of her.

I learned, accidentally, in conversation, that she had passed one day in the house, near the Conde's, in the Rua de San Bento, for the sake of attending the Opera in the evening, and that, on her first arrival in Lisbon, she had occupied those apartments for many weeks.

I have said that she studiously avoided both my looks and words; so admirably did she contrive to disappoint my wishes, for any more unrestrained expression of my feelings, that, during three weeks of daily visiting, I never once saw her alone.

To a naturally ventured question of mine, concerning the Shakspeare, she coldly replied (in French) that she had known the English language from her childhood, as she had been very early instructed in it; and then she point-

edly changed the subject, as if requesting it might not again be alluded to. I remember, too, that whenever I entreated her to favour me with an air, or music, her selections were designedly disappointing; they were of a light and cheerful, or of a cold and scientific character. Once only as I looked a deep-felt reproach upon her, she sung, in sorrowing tones, a something to calm my diseased mind; and her eyes had the soft expression of one who was saddened, pityingly saddened, to see the strong impression that she made.

Heavens! What I suffered through that short period of my first love — for love it was, though not, alas! that fond, requited feeling — that pure leaping of one young heart to its virgin fellow.

It was a deep, passionate admiration — a panting of the sick heart — a burning of the fevered brain. Her image was ever present. My walks, my lyings down, my days, my nights, my dreams were full of her, were haunted by her form.

Had I been a painter I could, from memory,

have drawn the every beauteous trifle that stamped a bright originality upon each lovely feature ; in all their varying and changeful expressions would have caught, and fixed the passing charm, till each day should have multiplied new portraits of the idol mistress of my love. It grew upon me this strange malady. I did not seek to check it. I fed it full of wildest hopes, of wishes, spurned as they rose ; but yet, that as my fancy once dared admit them, had dropped some stain upon my heart.

I said, and felt within myself, that I would rather die than entertain a thought, a wish injurious to her honour ; but, should the Prince die ! ah — why check the thought ? He was not immortal ; but for me, were in his grave already. The gambler's grave was often dug by others ; sometimes by disappointed, ruined self. He was a deep, a desperate gamester. He did not love this angel, was not loved by her ; that way hope lay. Thus whispered my evil spirit ; and having whispered, in all my visionary vigils, up came this phantom of delight to mock me.

The sensitive plant never yielded to the ap-

proaching touch with quicker tremblings, than I to the gentle air of her very robe, as at any time, in moving through the saloon, where we sate, she passed my chair.

At last worn down, and preyed upon by the tyrannous passion, I determined on disclosing to her the state of my tortured feelings, and asking for a few words, mere words, to live upon, to love upon ; of pity, friendship, counsel, any thing so she but heard me ; and replied——.

The Prince, by degrees, recovered his strength of limb, and went out as usual. I heard him announce, one evening, that he should be absent on the morrow, and not return till the day following. I felt certain that I should not be expected by the lady Agatha, and might thus surprise her into an interview.

It was that brilliant hour of evening, when it is yet long to the set of sun ; but the sinking orb is all a clear-seen, glorious world of light ; no longer are the rays fervid ; no longer are the glades between the forest trees exposed, glaring and hot ; but the long shadows of evening spread on and on, delightfully, as if to give and to

gather coolness. The garden, the fountain, the wood, the stream, the heath, the rock, invite all forth to roam, and meditate, and to be thankful, that they live in such a world.

Music breathes softer at such an hour. Again, as I approached the gate leading to the Prince's villa, again I heard the melody of the harp ; far off I was ; but yet I stayed my disturbing step, and listened to the air : the same, the very same that I had first heard, that I had loved, that I had maddened on. With yet a deeper feeling, if that were possible, she sung, and the last tones seemed as if they melted away ; not into silence, but into distance, bearing that melody on, — on, — upon unseen wings, — never to die.

She ceased, and I drew near. I approached by a path, which so led upon the pavilion, that, all unseen myself, I could first look within.

She had left the harp, and was seated in a low chair of antique Grecian form ; she leaned far back, and her limbs were extended far before, her feet crossing, her hands, entwined together, lay resting on her lap. Reclining thus, as one who thinks and sorrows, she

gazed on vacancy; a mellow light fell on her, a calm radiance floated over the whole picture; her whitesmar of Florence silk was clasped more loosely on her bosom, her square kerchief of white lace was arranged on her head with that slight confinement at the forehead, and that easy careless fall behind, which is a most ancient, and, to my eye, a most beautiful costume. But it was on her I first saw it, and on her what could have appeared otherwise?

I paused, and gazed on her with breathless adoration; then, rushing suddenly forward, I fell upon my knees before her, and, seizing her fair hand, kissed and wept upon it, in a strange agony of unrepressed tumultuous abandonment.

She would have risen; but was so entirely surprised, as to sink back upon her seat, exhausted by the effort. I looked up into her dark eyes; tears were gathering in them; few and pearly they ran down her fair cheek, and trickling fell on mine. Scalding they were, as if the lightning of her glorious eye burned even in them.

“Agatha, say, say that you pardon my unhappy passion; say that you will not hate me;

say that you will think of me as a friend—a loving, doting friend—one, my Agatha, to whom the few short hours near you have been ages of pain and joy, of sweet agony, of melancholy transport.”

“Beavoir, I may not, must not listen to words and tones like these.”

“Pity me! Oh! say you pity me.”

“I am a woman, and have loved.”

“You love another, then.”

“I am a wife.”

“You love another.”

“Spare me, I pray you, spare me. Ah! do not waste the sweet affections of your young heart on such a wild and guilty love; place them where in honour you may; where in hope you may; where a pure, young, love-warmed heart may meet, in innocence, the fulness of your own. I am a wife, and cannot hear you.” So saying, she rose abruptly.”

“Come, let us go; I may not, must not hear you more, Beavoir. It is my wish, my prayer, that you would never, never think of me; not even as a friend. You are not formed for friend-

ship. Your friendship would soon become a stormy passion—a guilty love—a crime in you, and misery to me. Farewell.”

Again I kneeled, and caught her robe.

“Hear me for a moment; one little moment hear me. I will be calm, guarded, resigned; but do not, do not shun me. I have no guile, no poison. Wretched I am; faithful I must be. Innocent you are; still are you the cause of all my bitter woe. Heaven formed you lovely, formed you to be loved. This coldness is no virtue; ’tis tyranny—the proud sin of woman. You see the deep sufferings of your victim. A word; a look; a pale smile of pity, such as daily with innocence you might and could bestow; and my poor grateful heart would live, with fond content, upon such alms.”

“Beavoir, you know not what you ask. I have a feeling for you, as strong, as true, as pitying regard may be; only name not love. The word alone tears wider in my bosom a slowly closing wound. Thus much I say with pain. To none other have I ever breathed this. To you the knowledge may be healing. Leave me, I entreat you, leave me. If you would

not that I yet more strictly shun you, leave me." I rose.

"Be that the pledge. I go; but go, in fond and fervent hope, that I may reap the bright reward of such kind look and tone as I may innocently seek, as you may innocently give."

With a deep darkling gaze of saddened gratitude, she looked on me, and replied, "Then be this scene forgotten."

"Forgotten!—Oh! it shall live a kalend of delight. A day for the mind's eye and ear to feed, to feast on. Reverted to at every hour of wakeful being, and lived o'er again in dreams. "Pardon my first, last crime." Then bending closer to her, I pressed my lip devotionally on her fair, fair forehead; and rushed, for I dared not linger, from her magic presence.

We met again—but now that I had poured my passion out, the presence of others was no protection to her. My looks, my words, my every action were to her a constant worshipping; vain, vain was her imploring, all eloquently, though silently, expressed. Resolutely she avoided all secret interviews; others she could not,

without she had told her cold, scornful lord, and this I felt persuaded that she never would. Thus cruelly I urged my suit, though neither seeking, or thinking of any issue, least of all a guilty one. One evening in returning me a book, in which I had been calling her attention to some passage of beauty, she placed between the leaves a billet to my address. I retired, and flew hastily homeward. I shut myself up in my chamber, kissed, and opened it with rapture.

“ Note from Agatha.

“ Mr. Beavoir, is this generous ? Is this manly ? to your honour, to your delicacy I appeal ; let me not appeal in vain ; your attentions are painful to me ; indeed, persecuting.

“ A. B.”

“ To Agatha in reply.

“ Beloved and idolized woman, do you think, then, that it is possible for me to draw forth the arrow which has slain my peace ? But why do I speak thus, as if complainingly ? Peace is slain ! yes ; but a love born from its expiring sighs, which nothing can, which nothing shall destroy. Vain are all your looks, now in cold reproof

averted, and now so enchantingly imploring; vain. You will not pity me; Agatha, you shall; you are alone in heart; you know, you feel that you are. I ask no higher privilege, no fortune more golden than to be your friend; yes, friend, to listen to your bosom's beatings, and answer them with mine.

“ Beautiful, beautiful thou art, Agatha! yet, before we met each other, my ear had listened to your angel tones; my heart had already vowed a fond allegiance to thee; and then I saw you, and, our eyes met. You have not forgotten, no, you cannot have forgotten that evening at the Opera. How your loved image haunted me from that hour forth, till the more blessed one, when I awoke to the soft pressure of your hand! Moment of happiness, return — return. I would daily die that death of swoons, to be so sweetly wakened.

“ Once only has fate favoured me; once only have I sought to pour out at your feet my full, my overflowing heart. 'Tis true you would not hear me; but, Agatha, you wept; your burning tears have kissed my cheek, and, as

they did so, sealed me for your slave. You have loved another ; does he live ? if so, he is not worthy of your thought. Here, here at your foot, living but to look on you ; here should be his place of worship. O bid him come, that my heart may wrestle with his heart, and thine the prize. — Or is he dead ? I'll mourn with thee ! learn of thee how he looked, and spoke ; what way he wooed, and won thee. Agatha, there is a second love ; a love of sympathy — strong, undecaying, less destructible than common love. Engraft thy broken myrtle branch on my young heart ; love me, Agatha, as a friend ; innocently ; but only love me ; then will I be submiss, and calm, and gentle. It is the struggle tears me, and makes me the wild worshipper you shrink from. Soothed by your smile, healed by your balmy voice, I shall be quiet as the hushed infant at his mother's breast. Let it be thus, my dearest, dearest Agatha. If you forgive this ; Oh ! you must ; if you forgive this, play for me to night—you have not for many evenings past—in pity, in pure pity, play for me that sweet air — do — it will medi-

cine my sick heart. I will not pain, will not persecute you; reward me only by this; if you refuse, again shall my disappointed love have way. You have seen how, with a young love seated on his mane, the shaggy lion is no longer fierce, but walks, all lamb-like, in fondled pride; be kind to me, Agatha; and thus will I.

Ever and devotedly thine,

“OSMAN.”

We met in the evening — I played chess with the Prince, and afterwards we paced the saloon together. Agatha sat apart, silent and abstracted. I governed myself well; ventured on no long, and distressful gazings — scarce addressed her; put no emphasis in my tones. — She felt that I was behaving well. Once, and once only, I saw her, through a mirror opposite, look on me, in such sort as a tender mother would on a sick and wilful child; but the expression of her eye changed almost instantly, and you could see that her mind was looking back into years gone by, and scenes long passed away.

“ Agatha,” said the Prince, “ you quite neglect your harp.”

“ I have, lately,” she replied, as she rose and moved slowly towards it. I saw her eyes raised upwards, and marked that chill shuddering of the frame which tells of settled sorrow. I felt low, and I dared not ask for my favorite air. Two or more she gave in a style, for her, of cold indifference and tameness; at last, preluding in low, sad, wandering tones, as if she were playing a something never regularly composed, she sung these words: —

“ It never dies — a broken love,
For its nest is a broken heart,
It lives, it plains, a lonely dove,
Till the soul and the body part.
O sweet is the coo of a lonely dove,
O sweet is the grief of a broken love.”

As she ceased from the simple strain, I observed her eyes filled with tears. I was yet a man — I loved her indeed to madness — I could, the yesterday, have pressed her to my bosom and kissed away her tears — but I felt

awed — said little, and went subdued away. — With the morrow the strength and fire of my passion returned. I remembered the look of pity that she had cast on me, and knew such feeling was akin to love.

The late autumn of Portugal is a very delightful season; the ground is no longer parched — the foliage of the evergreens is no longer shrivelled up — the heat, and the drought are gone — the meadow-saffron — the autumnal snowdrop, and many sweet smelling flowers appear, rejoicingly, as it were, after the first rains; while the young grass springs up, and the new leaves shoot out, and the whole face of the country smiles beneath the clear, pleasant, mild October sun. I remember me of one happy day about this period.

We had made a little party to visit the monastery at the summit of the Cintra Mountain—the Prince, the Count (for I had brought them better acquainted), father Antonio, Agatha, and myself. We rode mules, or baudets, but I was, almost the whole time, that is, in every steep or difficult path, on foot by the side

of Agatha, to watch, to guard her, to give the constant and ready support. You are forced to ride singly along these narrow mountain mule-tracks. It was easy for me to contrive the apparent chance of following close to Agatha; and my attentions seemed but natural. To her alone were they painful; though it was plain that she was softened down and subdued into a submissive gentleness by the tender, yet impassioned, delicacy of my every act. We first passed through a wood of large trees; the oak, the pine, the cork-tree, and many others; among waters too — there were loud babbling and silent streams — here, issuing from rocks, there, gliding along in cool, green, mossy places. We passed a thick coppice of the strawberry-tree, and at last rose above all vegetation, and reached the high naked point on which stands the chapel. As we sate on this lonely spot amid wild rocks, and looked down upon the white houses of Cintra nestling in the wood's deep bosom, and then out upon the wide-extended calm sun-reflecting ocean, we were all silently delighted: the eye of Agatha sparkled with

a new beauty, with an expression almost of happiness. After a while our companions went into the monastery, and she, for coolness, repose, and the fair view, remaining seated on the stone bench without, I bore her company. Silent we sate, but there is a speaking silence — a kind of sweet and secret complacency, to think that the human being by our side has the like tastes and feelings; that the congeniality of hearts is acknowledged.

It was long before a word was uttered; at last, Agatha said to me, “Osman, look upon that smiling ocean; the pall of darkness will shroud it ere a few short hours have passed away; — thus it is with life, and thus it is with love.”

She rose, and, entering the chapel, passed into a gloomy recess where stood a mean shrine lighted by a dim taper's ray, and fell on her knees before it; for an hour she remained there motionless, and prayed in silence; there was a calm relieved expression on her face, when she came forth, that charmed, but awed me. I felt a sweet content as we de-

scended the mountain; the vale below was all coolness and perfume; the deep shades of evening gathered on us ere we reached home, and all was still—even my wild and guilty passion still.

It was arranged, in the course of the evening, that we were to set out the next morning, as early as four o'clock, to assist at the festival of All Saints, one of the greatest annual festivals in the country.

“Your countrymen,” said the old Count, addressing himself to me, “generally absent themselves from the sad spectacle exhibited every year on this gloomy holiday; they retire to their garden-houses; gladly would I also; but I dare not; the eye of the Inquisition is evil, and is every where. Shocking as it may be to one of your gentle nature, it is well for the traveller, especially the happy, free, privileged Englishman, to gaze for once on the solemn scene of an Auto da Fé.

“The death procession of the poor sufferers differs from that of all common executions, and though sadly so, yet nevertheless is mournfully

interesting, and very painfully humbling to the mind. Here in this presence I freely speak my sentiments. The good father Antonio participates in my feeling, and the day may yet arrive when we shall both be made to pay the bitter penalty of our free love to all sects of Christians who cling in simple sincerity of faith to that cross on which hung the one mighty Redeemer of all."

The morning came. The Prince and Agatha, who had to attend the court, went forward in their carriage. The Count and father Antonio in another. I rode alone.

The sad thought of the Auto da Fé was entirely driven from my mind by all that delightfully engaged and filled it, in the various scenes and lively groupings on the road. It was covered with country people and peasants, all gaily decked off in their holiday garbs. The gaudy waistcoat, the shining buckle, the ribboned hat, the laced boddice, the silver crucifix, the netted or the glossy upturned hair, the garrulous old, and the prattling young, all loud, and joyous, and walking briskly on. The fine per-

fume of the narcissus was wafted from every nosegay; and the high-piled grape-basket was held up to the passer-by with bright, inviting smiles. All was joy. In the suburbs there were fresh, green bushes at every vintner's, and large groups of idle, merry muleteers quaffing and laughing round the noisy door. In the streets of the city itself there were gay, silken tapestries hanging down from all the windows, and blooming flower-pots arranged in all the balconies. Now, the grey head of a yellow-faced duenna; now, the glossy ringlets and sparkling black eyes of a pretty eager-looking brunette; now, the woolly pate, the black, shining cheek, and the white rolling eyes of a negro servant, were thrust forth in expectation. All was joy.

Amid all these more innocent preparers for the pleasures of the coming holiday, might be seen many big, burly, pitiless-looking monks, and a few sallow, chilly, smiling priests; while tottering vergers, and active young choristers dawdled or ran about with a sort of eager and pleased importance.

It was about eight o'clock when we arrived.

The Prince and Agatha were to dine with the Count after the ceremony; and, in the evening, we were all to attend the Opera together. With so much actual and so much prospective enjoyment I was highly excited. I could not sit down. I washed, and changed my dress, walking about my chamber all the time. I sipped my chocolate in the like restless manner; had a smile for the merchant's daughter, and forgot, of a truth, that any body was to be or could be miserable that day, till the sound of the Count's voice and that of the benevolent monk, in fervent prayer, coming from the Oratory near, checked the vain flow of my spirits; and, as I heard them put up a solemn petition for the poor wretches who were that day innocently to suffer, I felt reproved for my levity, and my heart beat a sincere amen.

Yet, nevertheless, so powerfully are we acted upon by matter pressing on and around us, so alive is the sense to delight, that, after, when I went forth alone, though I did shudder when, as crossing the square of the inquisition, I saw the scaffold; the insulted altar near it; the

wheels of torment; the stake; the chain; the faggots; the stern soldiers; the savage-looking familiars, and the thronging multitude of beggars and low rabble gathering to look upon those whom they might be comforted (for a moment) by considering as yet more wretched than themselves; — though I did shudder as I saw these things, yet, as I entered a church near, and heard, for the first time, the full deep chorus of an immense crowd of monks arranged in procession, according to their various orders, and, as in parts, they ceased, and the strain was taken up by female voices, which came out from behind their high and retired gratings, like the answerings of spirits, I felt a solemn pleasure which, while the organ continued to peal forth its praise, and they to chaunt the sacred hymn, I could not check the admission of. At last, forth they went, each bearing a thick torch of yellow wax lighted; black, brown, and white, were the robes of their different orders, with crosses of white, green, or red, embroidered on them. Their bald heads shone venerably, and, as they passed, the people stood uncovered, bent, and

crossed themselves, with low, devout mutterings, to the banners of the saints.

And now a shout of joy burst forth, as the Patriarch and his proud train, and the gay nobles of the court appeared from another quarter. Immediately martial symphonies struck up, and the royal guards of horse and infantry sounded their piercing trumpets, and beat the point of war. Above all these notes of joy, rung loudly out the merry chimings of clear bells, inviting to open churches and dressed shrines; and, through the wide, wide city, each street was filled with glad and hurrying crowds.

All of a sudden I felt a slight rising in my breast as of sickness — I deemed that I had gently staggered, or was giddy; but no — every sound became (on the instant) hushed or broken, like the fear-checked laugh of the menaced idiot; — another sound arose — a dull, low rumbling — low, but every ear heard it, and then upheaved the solid earth, and terribly shook: and the bells rung, fearfully to hear, a people's knell; the ruin, the awfully terrific ruin, rushed, rattling close upon that wild peal; — towers and lofty palaces

toppled and fell — the huge stones clanged clear and frightfully, then thundering tumbled heaping below. Darkness arose. A ruin-cloud, thick and earthy, that might be felt. Bodies were crushed — flights stopped — fears ended — cries stifled; but I — I amid these terrors, how shall I paint me? Methought that it was me the destroying angel sought — me first, and more than all; it seemed that I was the sole cause of the dread judgment. The wailings and the cries sounded horrible in my ears; — the staring eyes, dilated wide by terror, all seemed to look on me — I had filled up the measure of men's crimes: for me, for me the world's end was sooner come; — the trumpet, the trumpet, it would sound — now — now the last vial of wrath was to be poured out, and the throne set, and the books opened. My heart failed me for fear, and I rushed frantically about to find where I might shelter me — ward off my fate for one, one little moment, and plead on mercy's ground. I ran into a church — the crowded supplicants knelt, groaned, and beat their bosoms — the roof yawned, and fell,

and crushed, and buried them. I hurried after a flying crowd towards the river bank. A stone cross fell from a chapel front on a young mother (in my path) and slew her: her babe fell in its swathings unharmed at my feet — I stooped and caught it up in my arms, that its innocence might plead for me at the awful bar. I flew onwards to the river. Strange Providence, or fate, or destiny ! Before my eyes, within three paces of me, the small square quay, and the closely clinging crowd upon it were swallowed up quick. A mighty rolling volume of black water burst roaring on the fatal spot, and heavily subsided with a loud, mournful sound of stifling absorption. I turned, and fled across and out of the perilous ruins; far and rapid was my course. I paused not among those crowds, who, having gained the open fields, had thrown themselves down on their knees, on their faces, and on their bellies, in every attitude of terror, agony, and prayer. I stood not among those, who, in a fondness struggling with their fear, turned their pale gaze upon their vanishing homes.

I thought not of aiding any human being: it

seemed to me at once a wild and a vain presumption ; — as soon might one hope to touch the hand of Lazarus lying in the bosom of Abraham, as succour, serve, or approach even the good, — as avert the fate of the evil and the sinner. Something, indeed, of a different momentary impulse, had moved me to lift the fallen infant, and still I pressed it closely to my panting bosom. On, on I fled, till, passing with a quick, hesitating fearfulness, under the lofty central arch of the Lisbon aqueduct, I found myself alone — alone on the bank of a clear, shallow rivulet, which, in peaceful murmurs, flowed gently over its rocky bed, and glistened to the sunbeams, and watered the roots of flowers where bees were humming over their honey-yielding treasures.

I threw myself down on the grassy bank. — I did not thank, or praise, or supplicate my God ; but I seemed to ask, and find security in the sight of the water and the flowers, and a companionship in these sweet, natural sounds. Wrath was on the city ; but here, even I should be spared here, for the very bees' sake.

I had scarcely recovered myself with these thoughts, and placed my little burthen on the green earth by my side, when my attention was arrested by a very solemn voice, which, in an unknown and harsh tongue, was earnestly engaged in a fervent, praiseful devotion. I looked around, but could, at first, see no one: at last, in a retired spot behind some myrtle bushes, I saw a strange, an appalling figure.

An aged man, with a neglected beard of a dull, sandy red, a wan, wild look, and tearful eyes, sate uttering words aloud, but quite abstracted, and ever and anon, he bowed forward his head, and pressed his forehead in the dust. A large extinguished torch lay by him. He wore a high mitre-shaped cap, and an ample surplice, or surcoat of a glaring yellow. Flames, devils, and imps, of every form the black fancy could suggest, and at the bottom a decapitated head with the lighted firebrand and faggot beneath, were rudely depicted on them. A motion of mine disturbed him; he started, and seized the torch

by his side, as it had been a weapon, and rose up suddenly; but, staggering from weakness fell; he did not, however, faint, but cried aloud, "Ha! do you follow with your Christian vengeance here? Now, may the God of Jacob swallow you up quick — I have not bowed down, and worshipped your golden calf. With Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego I have been faithful. Ye would have cast me down into your burning fiery furnace; but, lo! I am delivered out of your hands."

I moved towards him with an eager, and kind anxiety —

"Back, I say — back to your burning Sodom — surely, my Lord shall destroy you, and rain down fire from Heaven on your head."

"I am no enemy — I would serve, save you."

"Are you a Christian?"

"Yes."

"Then are you to me as the Philistine, and the Canaanite. I spit my hate at thee, though it bring my death stroke."

"Unhappy man, from my soul I pity you; trust me; you may safely, I am an Englishman."

“ Ah !” said the unfortunate, with a prolonged exclaim, and doubting gaze, “ an Englishman ! I have heard my people say good things of your nation ; you do not pluck us by the beard, — you do not burn us, and sing your hymns as we groan out our death agonies. But yet you are a Christian ; how shall I — how can I trust you ? You will go, smile, and tell the shaven monk, ‘ there is a Jew dog in yon hollow, go, drag him back to the roasting ; go, fetch the old Jew dog, and let us see him blaze.’ Yes, yes, you will, you will. Again they will light this torch, and put it in my grasp, and make me fire my own funeral pile. Ah ! the Christian ! the Christian ! he has no bowels of mercies.”

I was amazingly agitated and affected by all this ; and, at length, after much ado, I prevailed on him to listen to and trust me.

I tore off all the death garb which would have betrayed him, and broke away the top of the pitched cap, and fastened my cravat around his aching temples, and parted with him the clothes I had on me. Fortunately, after the fashion of the time and country, I had gone out

that morning in a cloak. It had been fastened round my throat with a clasp, so that throughout the whole awful scene, and in my flight, it had hung on me forgotten. Now I gladly wrapped it round this old man, who sate passively under my services, letting tears fall warm upon my busied hands. I brought water in my hat, and gave him to drink; and I bathed his haggard and unwashed face, and put my shoes upon his bleeding feet.

And now, the little infant crying out, I went back to the spot where I had laid it down; took it up, and returning, seated myself again by the poor Jew's side.

As soon as his eye caught the figure, and swathing of the babe, he broke out with —

“ Ah! this is of my people, and kindred — a Hebrew child. Now blessed art thou young man; two hast thou saved of the chosen race; surely the God of Abraham shall reward thee.”

That this child was of Jewish parents I had not been aware, and related to him how the mother perished. He looked closer upon the infant, and after handling an ornament around

its neck, with a strict, but nervous attention, breathed a deep and powerful sigh, and said—

“It is my daughter Rachel — my pleasant daughter, who has been slain in the city. She, the loveliest plant of all my house; she, that was like a polished corner of the temple; she is gone down to the grave before me who begot her, gone where the wicked cease from troubling.” And he took the babe out of my arms, and pressed it to his own bosom, and his matted beard fell kindly and cherishingly upon it — and, it did not cry.

Soon after a piercing female shriek rent the still air, and a girl with streaming hair, and torn robe, and bare breasts, and uplifted face, and cheek of a pallor wilder than that of death, came up, and passed us with the speed of terror; and a man, *a man*, pursued.

I burst upon his path like the roused lion, but he heeded not; with one strenuous effort of violent and mighty strength he hurled me from him, and away and on after his timid virgin prey.

I followed fast, but, stumbling, fell, and was,

in my turn, overtaken by a party of ruffians, who, after rifling my person, and taking from it watch and rings, tied me hand and foot to a neighbouring tree, and gagging me, sat down under its shade, and proceeded to divide a great quantity of booty: — first, however, each took a long, full draught from a skin of wine, which they grasped, and pressed bladder-like, with a kind of exulting action.

Ere they began to cast their lots, the ruffian, who had pursued the girl, returned with a bloody knife, and a dark and bitter smile.

“She’ll be no man’s wife in this world,” said he, wiping his knife on the looser part of the wine skin, and proceeding in a fierce and hungry manner to cut from a loaf of coarse yellow bread.

“What, you have not done for her Jack, sure?”

“I have cut her throat.”

“Why, that’s quarrelling with luck;” said a third.

“Oh! she’d too many tantrums for me.”

“Then you have sent a poor young virgin to heaven afore her time.”

“To the devil for aught I know, but a maid for my share of her.”

They now turned with a coarse, busy glee to portion out the money and trinkets they had gotten; and drew lots for them in an old brown rimless hat. After this two of them disappeared, but soon returned, bringing with them a large skin of wine, and the broken bottom of a common brown earthen pitcher, a mere sherd, as a drinking cup; out of this they continued to pledge each other deeply.

They were dressed in short full canvass trousers, all tar-stained, and blue jackets, except the murderous violator, over whose broad herculean shoulders was tightly drawn a woollen shirt, or waistcoat of that blue and white stripe worn by seamen, and admirably fitted to display the frame: this was gigantic in its proportion; the breast half open, and shaggy; one eye was kept half closed, the other had the fierce glare of ready malignity; his neck was like a bull's; his hair dark, matted and dirty; his beard red, and stubbly, and the loss of a front tooth gave to his laugh an expression absolutely horrible. It was

clear they belonged to some lawless crew, and had probably been buccaneers or pirates all their lives.

It was awful to hear them joke about the earthquake, and liken the rocking of the solid earth to their vessel's motion. They sung too snatches of old songs :

“ Play, beggars, play,”

“ There's scraps to-day,”

I remember was one, and the chorus of another ran thus :

“ Drain, drain the bowl,

“ Each fearless soul,

“ Let the world wag as it will ;

“ Let the Heavens growl,

“ Let the Devil howl,

“ Drain, drain the deep bowl, and fill.”

Never will this awful revel pass from my memory ; they continued to drink full draughts, fiercely, and rapidly. At length their eyes became dead, dull, fixed, and one after the other,

they dropped into slumber, and lay spread about in all the indecent, relaxed attitudes of drunken sleepers, breathing full, and loud.

By continual working I contrived to loosen first one arm, and then the other: a knife, which they had dropped close to the tree, I managed to reach, and first cutting the string that bound the gag, and then the cords around my legs; I stole softly from the spot, with all the throbbings of escape. In the first place, I searched for the poor female; she was a stained, and marble corpse. I hurried away from the piteous spectacle. Next I flew to the bank of the rivulet, where I had left the Jew, and the young child; there were no traces of them.

Although the horror was deep, with which I had listened to the wretched and wicked beings, from whom I had just escaped, still, as they aroused my disgust and indignation, the scene, awful as it was, had restored my mind's strength.

Agatha! — the Count! — I thought now of them; of her especially; my whole heart was big with anxiety, and terror.

I ran back towards the city, or rather to the ruins of it, passing thousands of the sad inhabitants; far aloof they stood, or kneeled, or lay prostrate — wailing voices, and wringing arms, terrified and wondering children, dumb-stricken mothers, and raving widowers, were among them. I entered the ruinous place; flames were on all sides rising, here in broad sheets, there in thin wavy tongues; all pale they rose as the sun shone strong upon them — there were no streets; heaps, pyramidal or broader heaps of stones, brick, and rubbish: here half houses showing their apartments to the open daylight; there sections of churches, with their shrines gaudy, gay, and garish, shamed by the golden sun-beam. A few persons, whom love or avarice, virtue or crime, had stirred to the effort, might be seen moving about the black ruins, and among the pale flames, like the shadows pictured in the hell of Dante. The childless mother — the widowed lover — the tottering miser — the solitary Christian monk — the faithful servant; and, mingled with such beings, the daring

robber — the red murderer — the fiend-like violator — the cruel exulting incendiary. Some of all these classes were hunting, or eagerly, or with a half-venturing, among the fallen houses and the dead, and amid the helpless and groaning wounded. I well remember passing the opera house; half of it was down, the other all open to the gaze, and a pale flame was just approaching to a gorgeous scene of a festive hall, which hung down on the deserted stage. As thus I now remember it, it reminds me of an awful and a mocking picture, which exhibits a biform personage, the one side representing a richly apparelled female all beauty; the other a naked skeleton all hideousness.

On, on I wandered, eager, and almost wild; shuddering, yet fearing no longer; at last I came upon a spot where I heard English voices, and saw a party of seamen busy in extinguishing the flames, which were just approaching to a large and valuable store-house; among them, easily recognized, and actively directing them, was young Howard. He started when I called to him, and gave me the quick warm greeting

of a strong heart-felt joy. He had sailed away the very day after I had left the vessel, and only arrived again in the river the very evening before. He had been sent on shore, on duty, four hours after the shock destroyed the city; had been to seek me, and feared, from the answers to his enquiries, that I was a victim. From him I learned that my amiable host, the old Count, was killed,—that father Antonio had escaped. He pointed out to me the nearest, and safest path to the street I sought, and which, but for him, I should not have found, and thither I flew to learn tidings of Agatha. She lived, and had been taken to a nunnery at Belém, by father Antonio; her husband, the Prince, was among the dead.

And was it here? was it at such a moment? — was it amid so many burning nests of innocence and peace? — amid so many forsaken couches of guilty love? — amid the dead and the dying? — the wailing and the frantic? — when thousands still trembled in expectant fear, like quivering aspens, and thought a final shock was surely coming? — was it *here*, and

now, that the thought of wedding, and possessing Agatha, could be admitted in that heart which had, in the morning of that day, sunk, as if the abode of Satan were yawning to receive it, and, since that time, had swelled with gratitude for life preserved, and after had burned with indignation to look upon the murderous sensualist, and the reckless wassailer?

It was. I flew to the convent — of course I was not admitted to an interview. I went to the monastery of the white friars; father Antonio was coming forth from the gate; he immediately engaged me to return with him to the city, and employed me in all the labours of succour, and the offices of charity. For three days and nights we hardly rested; a hasty morsel standing in the refectory; a broken dog-sleep on pallets in his cell, and then again to our labour. The quiet, weak father had become all energy and strength. I was but passively useful; surprised and contented to find myself thus led, and constrained to do well. It were vain to attempt a picture of all I saw. I remember witnessing the execution of two of the

ruffian revellers I spoke of. They had been taken, and brought in by a party of sailors under young Howard, and were hung instantly, by order of the authorities ; as were numbers of like criminals ; I regret to say, the murderer of the poor girl was not among them.

By degrees order was restored ; the fires all extinguished ; guards stationed among the ruins ; property taken again under the care of owners ; labourers and workmen busy at repairs ; the suburb, however, was still one vast motley camp of the terrified, and the destitute.

It was at the dusk hour on the evening of the fourth day that, as I was returning alone to Belem, a man in a loose cloak with a broad slouched hat came, and pulled me by the sleeve, and motioned me to enter a lone ruined yard. I hesitated, but as the earnestness of his manner seemed friendly, at length yielded. No sooner were we out of all danger of being seen, and interrupted, than the stranger, throwing open his cloak, and raising the flap of his hat, discovered to me the rescued Jew.

Abruptly he spoke, " This night I sail away

from all Christian countries, you — you are no Christian. I come to you with treasure; treasure of God's giving. It is the wealth of monks, inquisitors. I only have discovered its hiding place. It is mine now, and yours; for I did swear to the God of my fathers that I would share it with my deliverer; never betray the giver to mortal man." So saying, he placed a small casket in my hands, and bowed his head upon them, then raising himself up, and turning suddenly, disappeared.

I felt flurried and embarrassed: what to do with the strange gift? Was it honest to keep it? Was it possible to conceal it? I felt that my rank and condition would render this easy. I could never be suspected as a plunderer. Was it plunder? a treasure won from the inquisition; its hiding place detected by one, who had writhed under its tortures, and had escaped its last boon, a burning death, only by miracle. Certainly he was no robber, whatever my scruples should, and ought to have been. I hastened home; the good father's cell was empty; only one small iron lamp burned feebly in the naked

chamber, and this hung just over a large crucifix. Its thick and drooping wick just bent out, from the black lip, over the pale and bleeding head, pierced by its crown of thorns.

I stood up on the wooden chair, and opening my casket, diamonds of the purest lustre sparkled under that feeble light, and gave it back in thousand-fold brightness.

Could my young heart be caught by a thing so mean as wealth? Wealth too secretly gotten, secretly possessed, and that must be fearfully enjoyed. It was—I who had no want on earth; had a gentleman's well-stored purse, and a generous father; what did I want of money? Why, the devil whispered, 'twas a wand of power; a something that increased my freedom. None, not even loving parents, could control the actions of a man of wealth. I might wed or wander, none say Nay to me. I hugged the glittering prize, and put it in my bosom; a few short weeks I thought, and Agatha may yet be mine, innocently, honourably mine. I will wear them out in dreaming of my coming joys. The terror of the earth-

quake past, it had produced an effect upon me awfully criminal, as I look back on it. I deemed that all should fearlessly make the most of the short, and uncertain interval of life; that joys were to be sought, and snatched, whenever the kind heavens did seem to wink.

It was in such a frame of mind, that, within a fortnight of the destruction of the fair city of Lisbon, I found myself seated at a party with one of our English merchants, the whole of whose property had been saved on that melancholy occasion, ruinous to so many. He had evinced great generosity to all the less fortunate, and also to all the suffering poor in the first days of the calamity, but now, as time had stolen a little on, custom, that second nature, had again covered his table with the master's favourite dishes; the sauces, the wines, the fruits, were, as usual, the very best procurable; the chance guests of misery had been provided with other quarters, or had sailed away from the sad scene of

their losses; the poorer inhabitants, who had, in truth, been liberally subscribed for, had been gotten away, at last, both from door and window; the select few were again gathered round him. Every thing that could reassure; every thing that could cheer, was acceptable. He had met me with a smile on my face, and therefore had asked me to dinner. I well remember the party. The acknowledged wit of it; the man, who filled the right-hand seat at the top of the table, who was helped to the very choicest morceau of the "Dindon farcie aux truffes," and had the virgin bumper of every bottle of champagne, was a Monsieur Beauregard, a French gentleman nearer sixty than fifty years of age; a hungry anatomy of a man with thin sallow cheeks, a nose of caricature aquiline, darkly begrimed with snuff, and adorned with that brown, pendent secretion, so abominably offensive to the eye.

To have been at Lisbon during the earthquake, to have survived, and to have it, as a subject of conversation, for the rest of life, was a something, which seemed to transport him be-

yond himself. Now he would gravely show the cause of the convulsion, ringing all the changes on inflammable air—sulphurous minerals—horizontal strata—perpendicular fissures—pyrites—the filtering of waters—ignition—generating a highly rarefied air, &c.; closing with the remark, that he had expected, and *clearly foreseen* the shock; that it was well over, would be very beneficial, and we might now feel secure for a long time to come. The good-tempered host listened to all with attention, and to the last declaration with peculiar delight, exclaiming—“Mais, mon cher, vous avez bien raison; c’est clair.”—“Pass the wine, Beavoir.”—“Beauregard, à vous;” and, at the same time, swallowing a bumper of claret with the true boozier relish.

Now again Beauregard would draw forth his flag of abomination, and spreading it on both hands, pause ere he trumpeted, and dealing forth some sly joke at the priests, or some gay double entendre, envelope his face in the secretion-wrinkled mouchoir, to conceal his exulting smiles, as all laughed loudly at his sayings, and

drank to him with that unmeaning cordiality, which belongs to such a scene.

And he sung — this old man — he sung a *Chanson à boire*, something about love, and wine, and the desire of his heart to divide his life between them — a withered limb, and a thin pale lip for the couch of Venus! and the cup of Bacchus! — Well, I was as guilty as he. I drank, I laughed at, and with him: combated I remember some stuff he talked about materialism, and thought I did so well; and thought, because he smiled politely, that I had conquered him.

There sat, however, by his side a young man, whose look, manner, and voice were all very attractive. He evidently had views, and maintained doctrines very different from any of us, and full of gloomy melancholy error. He could not reconcile the late terrible calamities, and the sufferings of so many innocent beings with Divine goodness, or rather with Divine power. I urged, I remember, that if age and virtue, youth and beauty, infancy and innocence, were, as we well knew they were, cut off every day, and in every part of the globe, by sudden,

and insomuch by untimely deaths, that the mere fact of so many blows of fate being congregated awfully into a few short moments of time, and on one unfortunate spot, made nothing against the goodness of that mighty and merciful Being, who had appointed for all men once to die, and to departed spirits *everlasting* habitations.

The youthful stranger smiled at me, sadly, yet beautifully smiled. The evening closed, as such usually close, with thick utterance, double sight, and drowsy noddings; but I had very little exceeded, and this young man had scarce drunk any thing. We passed home together.

It was in the open space before the convent of White Friars at Belem, whose carved and pinnacle-crowned front threw its deep shadow and solemnly clear outline down upon the moonlighted sand, that we parted. He caught my hand, and raising it, grasped in his own, pointed upwards to a distant dimly-beaming star.

“My destiny,” cried he, “is linked with you paling planet — my race will soon be run — destiny, dark destiny! I have trod the grove,

and the mountain, wearying heaven with prayers ; but stronger are the powers of evil. I am theirs— I have always hated their dark service—I have danced and revelled frantically; but the chains were always clanking to my mind's ear, and the iron was eating into my soul. Farewell, young stranger; may a brighter course be yours; may your ascendant star climb gloriously high; bliss be your portion here, and heaven hereafter; but brace your mind strongly up— be girded with firm resolve. I have prayed and wept, fasted and groaned through long and gloomy nights, and, when I have risen from my vigils, have found the fiend mocking, and ready in his strength, and driving me on to ruin.

“ That time is past, I now tread calmly, sadly on. The war of elements; the pestilence, the sword are to me— nothing. They cannot hasten my last hour; nor is there one overshadowing wing in heaven can shield me from the arrow of my conquering foe.”

Something I would have uttered to console him; but he moved rapidly away, and left me

alone with the shadow, and the moonbeams, and the night wind.

I shuddered ; there was something so awful in his melancholy tone of firmly persuaded woe. I had felt a kind of cheerful, gay contempt for the sentiments of the old Frenchman. I had felt a deep horror when this young German enthusiast had dared arraign the goodness, and dispute the power of the Creator. But when he made me this deep despairing confidence, I felt penetrated with sorrow. — Certainly he was deranged. I was sure of this ; but yet I had not come off an unwounded listener ; something of fear mingled with my incredulity. I looked up at the stars, and I wrapped my vest over my chilly bosom. I thought of the wild tempest, and the yawning waves — of the rocking earth, the falling city, and the perishing thousands — twice rescued — twice preserved. — Was I a child of Fate? — 'Twas strange — very strange. I paced the cloister rapidly to my cell, that I might the sooner escape from the mournful echo of my steps — laid me down on my pallet, and as I felt for the precious casket, forgot my fears, and

talked to myself of happiness to come — of Agatha — of smiles of affection and of beauty — of a home of bliss and love.

The morning, that followed on this night, I rose and went joyously, at the sound of the matin bell, to the convent, which contained her, whose form was ever present to me. It had been my regular custom for many days. I could not see her, but, I might, perchance, catch the sound of her well-known voice, in the chaunted hymn ; at all events, the very feeling that I was in her presence, and silently pressing my fond suit, had for me a charm — magic. Surely she would yield, ah ! gladly yield, when the short period of her widowed seclusion was gone by, and link her fate with mine for ever. She knew that I loved — adored her, as the Persian does his Sun. She did know it, and therefore fled me.

A lean, and wrinkled menial of the convent approached me as I left the chapel, and put a sealed packet into my hand — all rushed on me. — She was gone. When ? — the last night. Where ? — None knew save the Lady Abbess.

I would instantly have spoken with her; she would not even see me. I raved at the peaceful portals, and called loudly through the cold grate into the empty parlour; none heeded, or seemed to heed me. I flew to the river's bank; a boatman had observed a party from the convent embark, in the middle of last night, on board a ship which had sailed at early dawn, that morning; he knew not whither bound. A score or more of vessels had dropped down, at the same hour, and the eye might still discern them, where, just beyond the river's mouth, they were shaping their various courses, like the scattering white rays which play out in dark nights from a light-house point. No boat, he said, could now come up with any of them.

I mounted a horse, rode hastily to Cintra, and rode up its mountain far as my beast could carry me; and then, leaping off, eagerly climbed to the naked, rocky summit, and watched all those white sails, without knowing why, or which to gaze on, till night's curtain fell over the departing vision of my promised joy. Then was it that I entered, and asked the hospitality of the

convent. The garrulous, methodical old fathers had little fancy for so bewildered a guest at all, still less for his society, so that I was soon left alone, with bread, water, crucifix; and a lamp.

Now first I broke the seal of the small packet, which seemed the only remaining link between me and the vanished idol of my heart. I found a short letter, and a manuscript of some length. The letter ran thus :—

“ Osman,

“ You love me. I never can return your love. I am surprised, alarmed, terrified at your ardour. Nothing pure, nothing peaceful mingles with your passion. It pierces like the sea-bird’s cry, wilder and louder than the storm. I look upon you with tenderness, with sorrow, but with dread. I fly to some distant cloister. Again I tell you, never can I, never could I return your love. In the life of my late lord I could not, on his account, shut myself from your sight. I was forced to listen to your impassioned voice, to meet your ardent gaze ; and many a time have I mourned, in secret, over the slow

decay of those regretted charms, which first awakened your wild passion, and which have borne to me, their poor possessor, no fruit but sorrow. The contrast of your warm affection and my lord's cold indifference, was trying, very trying to my heart; thus only could your love ever have moved me at all. Thus was it that it did; but restored, amid the late awful scenes, to be the controller of my own actions, I turn back with a full and faithful heart, to my early, my only, my cold, yet cherished love.

“ In the hope and belief that it will assuredly dissipate all the illusions which associate me, in your day-dreams, with vain schemes of impossible happiness, I have written out for you my tale of sorrow.

“ I shall remember and pray for you.

“ AGATHA.”

Again and again I read over this letter, and wept upon it; and though it seemed to tear all hope from my bosom, yet I was to be remembered and prayed for by Agatha.

I kissed that line and her fair signature fer-

vently — next, opening the manuscript, I read as follows.

“ There is a large and beautiful lake in my dear native land, called Lough Erne. Islands innumerable stud its silvery bosom. They are green to the eye; and so are the softly swelling hills on all the shores around. I am sure, when I was a very little girl, the fondled and caressed darling of a tender mother, and dwelt amid these scenes, unknowing and unknown, and sung out my little carol, just as the bird might warble, or the lamb bleat, from the mere overflow of joy; I thought that heaven itself must look like that fair country, and contain good people like my mother, and happy singing children like to me. One only spot in the whole scene had any aspect of gravity or sadness. Very early I used to feel a little oppression as I looked upon it, and this sentiment grew upon me, and gained strength from many a tale, which my old nurse told me.

“ This small island, called Devenish, lay not very distant from that part of the main shore, on which stood our pretty mansion. It had a

deader, duller, and paler look than any other of the islets on the lake. The herbage was thinner and coarser, and more sand was mingled with the soil. The ruins of a suppressed priory stood in the centre of this lonely isle; and, near the spot, a very tall round tower of other days reared its gray columnar form, like a monumental pillar marking some patient and abiding grief. Close to those remains there was a large place of graves. The flat, weather-stained tomb-stones are so thickly fringed round with rank and drooping nettles, that you scarcely can decypher a name. Still, however, it was used as a place of burial, holy, and favoured by some of the old Irish families (the poor, that is); and I used to see many a boat carry over a corpse, a few mourners, and a solitary priest. Quickly a grave was dug; quickly the prayers for the dead were uttered; and then, as quickly, they hurried from the spot; and then, after, they would sometimes, perhaps, bring a flat stone, and lay it on the dead; but the rain would soon fall, and blacken such poor memorial—the nettles spring up, and droop over it; and it

only enlarged that melancholy-looking garden of death. There is a curious old relic among the weeds there, a long narrow coffin of stone, lying without a tenant. The virtues of this relic, as a prophetic touch-stone, whereby we may learn our present and future fate, are much boasted by the old peasant chroniclers: and, guided by the legend, they who dare, it is said, may read of their future weal and woe, by lying down in it, as it fits or otherwise, and, according to the postures, in which they lie and turn in it, so read they of their doom. But why do I dwell on trifles, and superstitions like these? Why do I paint the Isle of Devenish thus minutely? Because, as I have said, I had an early fear of it, and could not sing so freely when I gazed on it, as on any other object; again, because, after, it was to me enchanted ground, the bower of my innocent bliss; and, after, the sad witness of the killing of that bliss, and the desolate, gloomy, uncomfoting listener to my frantic complainings.

“I was an only child. My father away in a foreign land; I knew not where. He was in

the military service of Spain ; but had, from time to time, been employed in diplomatic situations ; and it was at Naples, while in the suite of the Spanish Ambassador at that court, that he had become known to, and formed his attachment for, my mother. She was the daughter of an English secretary, well-connected in Ireland, where, indeed, she had herself been educated as a child. That he was of a catholic, she of a protestant family, proved no bar to their union ; they were young, loved, overruled or disregarded all scruples of their friends, and married.

“ My mother’s friends, after a while, neglected her ; and my father, who was in some things a mere man of the world, and bent entirely on the pursuit of his own ambitious schemes, began to tire of the restraining presence of a wife, and, taking her to Ireland, fixed her down in the most painful sort of widowhood in the house where I, the third and only surviving child, was born. Humbled and unhappy, my mother lived a life of mourning and jealous privacy. On me she doted. I was her delight, her trea-

sure, her care. She was a highly-gifted, and a very accomplished woman, a fond, beloved instructress to a fond and loving pupil. Few visits were made to us; but those few were by the first and best families, periodically, twice or thrice a year; a kind of soother to my mother's pride of birth, but leading to and ending in nothing.

“Those neighbours in the small town a few miles from us, or in the scattered houses near, had neither the minds or manners, which she approved or could have lived happily with. As we had no gentleman in the family, we were soon allowed to sink into obscurity, and pursue our own quiet path; and, as I have heard, we were seldom named or thought of, save when some ill-natured person might feel inclined to amuse a party, and gratify himself, by some passing remarks on the silly affectation of the retired Mrs. O'Neil.

“A small green cot lay chained to the root of a tree at the bottom of our garden; and in fine weather it was the pastime of my mother to take me with her, and be rowed all about our beau-

teous lake. A cheerful old man in our service took care of this, and of our little green car, and two gentle ponies, and accompanied us, at all times, when we went abroad for exercise. Thus peacefully we lived. When I was about nine years of age, I remember my father came, and staid a month with us. He was a tall, dark, severe-looking man ; but spoke very softly and kindly to me. I used to pull flowers for him, and he would place me on his knee, for a minute, kiss and set me down again. I tried every little art to win his affection, to the evident delight of my poor mother. I would play the lesson I best knew ; sing the sweetest of my little songs ; coax him playfully to come and see my white rabbit, my doves, my pretty goldfinch, and hold him still by his coat-skirt, to listen to my sweet-toned lark. All this I did, artfully, perhaps, but yet with love, for I knew he was my father, and my mother had always made me pray for him, before I lay down to rest. Children, however, are very quick-sighted ; I saw that his eye never rested on me with real fondness. He patted my head, and kissed my

cheek mechanically. He talked much, and anxiously with my mother, and often, when so engaged, would send me out of the room to play, and as I ran before the window, in the garden, I remember the voices sounded earnest and eager within. At last he went away, and I was again left alone with my mother. For months after, her eyes used to fill repeatedly with tears, involuntarily as it were, and I would run and kiss them off, and she would strain me to her bosom.

“Week, month, year rolled on. I was now sixteen — a healthy, happy, peaceful young being; feminine, but yet fearless; accomplished far beyond my years, but humble and innocent, and ignorant of my chance gifts from nature. Ah! the happy day! the bright vision! but I anticipate.

“My mother and myself had passed a long day on the lake, and old Dennis, our faithful servant and champion, on all these excursions, was lying on his oars close to the Isle of Devenish, the rich effect of which, in the deep blush of sun-set, I was attentively studying,

under the guiding taste of my dear mother, in order that I might catch a proper tone for my colouring of such subjects.

“ Suddenly the cot swayed as if to overset. Old Dennis in reaching over for some purpose, had fallen into the water ; my mother tried to save, and followed him ; they immediately drifted away from the cot. In still alarm, yet swift, and anxious, I contrived to row to where my mother was struggling in the water ; I reached out, and caught hold of her, but she slipped from my grasp. I lost my presence of mind with the failure of my effort. Wildly I called — cried aloud for help, but I could see no one. Dennis, unable to swim, from lameness, joined in my eager cries, whenever the choking water suffered him. In that awful moment a sound of oars was heard, a vigorous strong pulling ; a cot shot round the point ; my mother was lifted with strength and skill into it ; away towards Dennis, and the like office performed for him, though with a difficulty and motion of the little bark that made me tremble for them all. The stranger youth called to

me to approach the shore, as it were better for a while to land the sufferers on the bank, and take them if possible to a cottage.

“All anxious as was that moment — how glorious, how beautifully glorious that young deliverer looked, — how soft, how manly, feelingly soft, the rich tones of his voice. I gazed and followed, at his bidding, with a kind of grateful, rapt, and delighted wonder. He lifted my mother in his arms, and carried her up, and laid her on a grassy bank, and in like manner, and with the like care, the old man after. He then flew off, and returned, in a minute or two, with a peasant and his wife; to his cottage he had them borne, one after the other, and leaving me with the warm-hearted peasant woman to undress and attend my mother, he did the same by old Dennis. In two hours my mother was sufficiently recovered to admit of her returning home, and expressed her anxiety to do so.

“It was but a mile’s row. Our youthful stranger placed us all in his cot, leaving the countryman to bring ours and the wet clothing

after. My mother, dressed half in my clothes, and with a peasant's frieze cloak wrapped closely round her, lay warm upon my lap : Dennis sate, a little forward, loudly thanking, and blessing his young honour : and I bent over my mother with a sort of fond exulting, that one, so very dear, had been so nigh the grave, yet snatched so mercifully from it, and given back to my heart its large its only treasure — two hours ago its only treasure. But there were new throbbings now in my young heart, and, as I looked up to answer the gentle voice, which asked to be directed to our garden bank, I felt them beat quick, very quick, and thrillingly. All things combined to kindle my young love. He was one of the first youths I had ever, if I may so say, seen even. He came like a guardian angel ; flew to the perishing cry ; was the preserver of my mother's life. The moral beauty of his active kindness was much — enough to claim regard ; — but O ! there shone a sunny lustre on his fine, fair brow, such as I never saw in any other created being. The softly burning light of his deep blue eyes ; the health-bronzed

bloom of his young cheek ; his fine formed nose ; his quiet, tender smile ; his long hair of a golden brown, which fell, after the fashion of that day, in thickly clustering, waving curls, on either shoulder ; his full, fair, graceful throat, all open to the air, with no other confinement than a broad black ribbon round his laced and falling collar ; and his firm, manly, yet elegant frame. Such, and a thousand times more beautiful, he was, for lights and sparkles fell about, and from him, in all he looked, or moved, or uttered.

That very night, as he sate for a few minutes in our parlour after seeing us safe within, and received our warm acknowledgements with a still, embarrassed joy, and then blessed aloud the lucky chance that had enabled him to render a service, on his part, so slight, so natural, and asked her leave to call again — that very night, I gave him up my heart. I loved him — love him still ; and shall carry down his cherished image to my grave. I cannot paint the growth of this our love. Such love hath no idle course of doubtful wooing ; no hopes, no fears ; heart leaps to heart, eyes look into eyes, and lips

but open to speak fondness. No — there are no misgivings, few blushings even, in a first, a fearless, innocent love, permitted, smiled upon. It has no guilt, no fear, not a mean doubt in it. My mother found it not in her heart to receive the visits of her preserver coldly. In every successive one he won upon her more and more. He was the eldest son of a gentleman of an old family, but small fortune, in a neighbouring county, was himself destined for the church, and was, at that time, residing with a clergyman on the borders of the lake, and reading preparatory to his entering at the university.

“He was nineteen years of age; in a few short weeks he asked my hand and heart, and offered his. I was to wait till he took orders. I was to be secret till he had seen, and obtained the consent of a fond, indulgent father, and of my own mother; or, no, I might tell my mother — I did so. What could she say? how could she say *no* to two young things, who loved, angel-like, as we did? She smiled her own consent, or hope, rather, as she faintly called it, but sighed some fears.

“ We nothing feared; we often met, often went, for whole days, with my mother, on the lake, and drew, or laughed, or sung, or looked and loved. We made many parties to the old Isle of Devenish, and sate, under the shadow of its ruins, sketching; and Henry would climb the tall, lone tower, and tell me, from the giddy height, of beauties in the far distance.

“ Henry ! Agatha ! — how sweet, how soft it was to us so to call each other, and the hands together fondly locked, and the ringlets parted and put aside by the free hand, and the mere looking in each other’s face.

“ Why did my heart beat heavily when my mother read from a letter that my father would arrive on the morrow ? He came, that father dark, and stern.”

I was here interrupted, as I read, by a loud knocking at the door of my cell. “ Come, Senhor, come, for the love of God, help us ! ”

With a fretful anger I threw down the manuscript, and answered the summons.

A travelling capuchin, who was lodging for

the night in the convent, had, it seemed, fallen down in a fit. He was a powerful man, and his strength and violence made it so difficult to hold him, that the few inmates of this secluded monastery were quite unequal, by themselves, to such a task. There are not many things more horrid to look upon than a strong man struggling in fierce convulsions. The white of the up-turned eye, the set teeth, the foam on the pale lip, the grasping or clenched hand, and the limb out-thrown with terrible force. It always seems as if there were invisible demons torturing man, and he in all the agony of a despairing, yet desperate resistance. I remember not how long his fit lasted; but, the very moment the stage of exhaustion succeeded, I flew back to my cell. A large heap of paper ashes was blown from the rude table as I threw open the door, and the large wick of the flat iron lamp was flaring down on the wood of the table, where, having taken it from its usual place on the wall, I had myself put it, and incautiously left it. In a moment I comprehended the misfortune; — the manuscript was consumed. It seemed as if I had a second time

lost Agatha herself. I cursed; I stamped; I tore my hair by the violence with which I seized it; I beat my head against the wall; I shed the tears of impotent, insane anger. The manuscript was irrecoverably gone — the history of that interesting woman, her loves, her sorrows lost to me for ever. A burning curiosity succeeded to my rage; and conjecture worked busily in my brain. Did the lover die by the father's hand? Was he slain among those ruins? And her faith; how and when was that change forced upon her, or taken by her? Her mother; did she yet live? And her cruel father? — I paced my cell with rapid strides, and conjured up a thousand sequels to her tale.

Then stole upon me a new feeling — jealousy — of an unhappy youth, whom I had never seen; the first impression he had caused by his prompt and eager aid, the glowing picture of his beauty, their looks, their tones, their mutual tender, happy love. Envy, too, arose; I had felt the passion of love, but such love never, never. I had lived, then, hitherto in vain, and the time seemed past, the spring season of

life gone by. I never could love as he, as they had done. One solitary comfort came to me, at times, but slowly and painfully admitted. It was evident that Agatha could never give me one such answering throb of her heart, as would satisfy the warm demand of mine. At first, however, even this thought lightened not my heavy chains; forged by strong passion, and by bitter sorrow, they bound me, as it were, in the dungeon of despair. I shut myself up in hired apartments at Cintra, or wandered forth among the deep shades of that romantic and endeared solitude; one day frantic — the next, disconsolate; every day anxious and unhappy.

It was about a week after this event, that a letter was brought to me in the hand-writing of Somers. I opened it with a sick, nervous feeling. It ran thus:—

“ My dear friend,

“ Your letter of November the sixth gave all at the manor-house the greatest possible comfort: they were in sad terror about you, until

it happily came to relieve our worst fears. Your father and your mother were suffering very severely at the time from another source of affliction and anxiety, and were far from well. Your sister was very weak, and in the lowest spirits. I can assure you that the intelligence of your safety and merciful preservation has revived and refreshed us all. We hope that, on the receipt of this letter, you will immediately leave Lisbon, and return home. Your presence is most anxiously desired, and will be very consoling to all. Family circles, as they become smaller, should draw closer. A very dear member of yours has been suddenly removed — your amiable brother Edward is no more.”

I dropped the letter, covered my face with my hands, and groaned and wept bitterly, as I paced my room with the quick step of agony. Alone I was, yet I covered my face. At last I took up the fatal paper, and read on —

“He died on the night of the first of November, after an illness of twelve days. He suffered much, until within the last two; when, mortifi-

cation having taken place within, he became easier, and remained so to the last. I am not a very young man, and it has fallen to my lot to witness the last hours of many. Never did I see any one give a brighter evidence of faith, hope, and love, than poor Edward. His patient endurance of acute pain, his constant anxiety to spare the feelings of his mother, his fear of giving trouble to the servants, or of breaking their rest, and his tearful gratitude for every little attention, affected all very deeply. Until the day before his death the nature of his disorder was so distressing, that he could neither read himself, or give even the attention of a listener; but he frequently prayed in whispering ejaculations, or silently with the closed lid, or with the quiet upward glancing of the humble. On the last day of his life, he read a little in the morning out of the pocket bible which you gave him on his tenth birth day; but, growing faint and weak, he closed the book, continuing, however, to hold it in his hands, with his eyes shut, and to press it with fervour and affection. I knelt by him, and read to him a chapter of

St. John, and prayed: he joined faintly in the responses, and thanked me with great tenderness. Towards evening he said to me, in a very solemn tone, ‘The forgetting of God is a great sin; the cause of all others; the cause of all woe and guilt. It has been mine.’ I whispered to him peace, and told him it had been the sin of every human being who had ever lived. I told him it had been mightily atoned for. ‘Yes, I know,’ said he, ‘in whom I have believed. I love and trust him; but I feel great, great awe. It is not fear—it is a bitter thing to die; a great sorrow to leave all whom we love on earth; yet I know it is best for me, or it would not be.’

“I watched in his chamber the last night of his earthly existence. He died as gently as he had lived. About midnight I heard a soft sound, as of quiet suppressed weeping; I did not like to disturb him at such a moment. Some time after, when all was still, I drew back the curtain to look upon him. His gentle spirit had fled away. I believe he died in those sweet tears.

I cannot write more. Come, come to the house of mourning, it will be good for you.

“Very affectionately yours,

“GEORGE SOMERS.”

“To the house of mourning!” I exclaimed, as my tears flooded forth, “to the house of mourning! Oh! Somers, the Osman whom you knew, the brother of the sweet and gentle Edward, I know not where he is. I look within—I cannot find him. The inner Osman is a being of warm, wild, restless wishes, with an aching, unsatisfied heart. One who could neither impart nor receive consolation. Not privileged to weep and grieve in a pure company of mourners. My once happy home would but represent to me the image of lost bliss, no more communicable.”

I wept long over the untimely fate of Edward. I would lie down upon my couch for hours, and think of him; and, when exhausted nature sank with me into slumberings, the image of Edward, in white dazzling raiment, with a crown of gold, would pass and repass before me. His young

face pale, but not fearfully pale. His look on me most sorrowful; but, when lifted upwards, a seraph smile sate on his parted lip, and the melody of holy praise came forth without a breath.

For weeks I neither saw nor spoke to any of my acquaintance. Once only I admitted Father Antonio, whose efforts to rouse me were all vain. The restorer of my mind's tone was a weak instrument—a little child, just at that age when the stammer is intelligible, and the totter fearless. It tapped with its little hand at my chamber door, and when opened for its weak short-reached little arm, ran in and round my table, to look for something to amuse its young wondering mind; then clasped my knees, and looked up in my face, with a playful beseeching; and pouted its little lip, to offer the rewarding kiss. Fondly I did kiss, fondly press it to my bosom; and, from that hour, I scarce suffered the little creature to leave me while I remained at Cintra. I tossed it in my arms, horsed it on my knee, leaned down my cheek to its pretty pattings of mock punishment, sung to it, laughed for it, loved it.

I can hardly paint the exquisite delight I felt in the companionship of this smiling little cherub. It was so comforting to know that you might love it without a doubt, without a single fear about any moral consequences, either of happiness or misery, to the infant or yourself.

In any ordinary circumstances such a heart-indulgence of a lone, solitary man might be passed over as harmless, as innocent ; but with a family praying for my safe return, with a positive duty to perform, as son and brother, this shrinking from it, this lingering, was a base sin. I felt it so; but not the less did I hew away at my broken cistern; and the like weak and wicked labour I was often to renew.

About this period I began to adopt that kind of religious notion, which has been, and long will be in millions (especially young minds) the prevailing one. For them the bard and the philosopher have, after their fashion, hallowed it; and a thousand glittering fables, framed but to mislead, have been sung to the most melodious harps, and delivered in the accents of the wisest of men. To look through nature up to nature's

God, methought was the only worship. To live well, that the only service. Alas ! the service that springs from such worship is never faithful, never consistent.

Does the sun rise in glory, or set in splendour ? Does the moon walk in brightness ? Do the stars softly shine ? Does the thunder terrifically roll ? Does the lightning vividly play on the dark bosom of the night-cloud ? Does the sea make a noise ? Do the winds lift up their voices ? Does the mountain rear a crown, awful with everlasting snow ? Does the sounding torrent fall in mad rushings from the precipice ? Are the deep shades of a forest of peace, or green vales of inviting loveliness, spread before us ? The heart is enticed, and the hand is kissed, and nature is worshipped, when we think we worship God. It is the sublimity and the majesty of his array which *alone* captivates our senses—the voice of the Law-Giver is unheard—the requirements of the Judge are never thought of.

In such scenes, we feel the complacency of a kind of virtue ; because, we do not, we cannot grossly sin ; but we come down again to streets

and lanes, and are the same weak, wretched beings that left them; save where taste comes to our aid, then, indeed, the poets are a kind of prayer books—admiration, the business of our lives, and a naked materialism our God. Thus was it with me—a Deity throned above golden clouds, in a region of light and bliss, I thought of with little apprehension; but a Deity, meek, merciful, lowly, pure, walking our earth, and seen of men, I shrunk from with a secret terror, one day; and a contemptuous incredulity the next.

To my tale. — Feeling myself unwell and unhappy, alike unfit, and unwilling to return home at such a moment, I wrote to state that my health had suffered very severely, which, of a truth, it had. I told them, that under these circumstances I was constrained to disappoint both their wishes and my own; and I feared, from symptoms of weakness in my chest, I should be detained much longer in a southern climate than I had ever contemplated. I begged them to feel no alarm, saying that my case was far from uncommon, and by no means so dangerous as to threaten life. As far as written language could

do it, I sincerely mingled my grief with theirs, for the loss of Edward. Of a truth, I had loved and leaned upon that boy. I had considered him as a kind of link between me and the Christian's hope; and his removal from earth seemed to separate me, especially as I then felt, immeasurably from heaven.

I fell rapidly, and low in self-esteem, after I had despatched this letter; for I felt that I had so exaggerated my illness, that my letter was but a written lie. Was it possible that I could frame and utter falsehoods; — and for whom? — to whom? Those who cherished me as an infant, loved me as a boy, and fondly gloried in me as a man. Ah! the first utterance of an untruth does, in all cases, open on the simple sinner the flood-gates of sin in its strength, and misery in its despair. The returning packet brought me letters from my father and Harriet. My father's was as follows: —

“ My dearest boy,

“ I am very much concerned that you cannot immediately return to us, and still more for the

sad cause of your detention. Deeply anxious as we all are for your speedy return, do not, I earnestly request, undertake the voyage sooner than prudence may warrant. On such a spot, I well know, you could not willingly remain a single unnecessary hour. Indeed, every association with your present residence must, of necessity, be so melancholy, that we cannot doubt your eagerness to leave it, and you must long to be once more safe at home. The many awful scenes you have lately witnessed, and your merciful preservation throughout them, have no doubt left a salutary and deep impression on your heart. I feel satisfied that my dear Osman will improve it. We have lately had our lesson, and have learned, by the bedside of your poor departed brother, how, with the hope properly fixed, a very child can look steadily upon the king of terrors. We are recovering, although slowly, from the gloom into which his loss had naturally thrown us; for, in the first moments, we were deaf to the voice of consolation, and turned from the comforting words of poor Somers, with the natural impatience of the bereft and the wretched. Colonel Ha-

milton (who is always talking about you), has been most kind. Old Frankland has shown, in his own odd way, a true neighbourly sympathy, and the girls have been to Harriet quite sisterly. Your mother still keeps her room; she was very much affected, so much so, that it induced a low nervous fever, which is only now beginning to subside. She sends you her fondest love, and bids me say, that she prays every night and morning for your safe return. Somers, who is now sitting in the room, and who, by the way, has been, under God's blessing, our only stay and true comforter, bids me give you his kindest regards.

“ Ever, my dearest boy,
Your affectionate father,

“ WALTER BEAVOIR.”

“ Poor Godfrey sends his duty.”

Letter from Harriet.

“ My beloved Osman,

“ I cannot describe to you how great was the agony of our suspense between our first hearing

that the city of Lisbon had been so awfully destroyed, and the arrival of that precious letter which assured us of your safety.—Wonderful!—You were preserved among perishing thousands, and poor dear Edward taken off in a scene of peace and security. God be praised that you were preserved; to have lost you both would have brimmed our cup of sorrow to the overflow. Our dearest mother is still very weak and nervous, and continually asks after you in tones of anxiety and doubt; nay, at times, almost of reproach. Shall I own to you, my beloved Osman, that, although I hint it to no one, your continued absence grieves and astonishes me? I love you, Osman, tenderly; you know I do. I look up to you. I am proud of you;—but I know your disposition better than any one here. I trembled for you when you left us, though I dared not oppose your eager, your natural wish. I have no experience in the world myself;—retirement is my lot; and I can gratefully, truly say, that my fate would be my choice. With your sex it is, it should perhaps be, different. But yet forgive me, my

dearest Osman ; I saw clearly, painfully, that you were going forth into the world without that shield and breast-plate, that sword and helmet, which alone can serve, alone can save, in combats that are not mortal.

“ No, Osman, it is not the state of your health which detains you far from us, your true, your only friends ; it is not this. Again I say that I have no experience in the world, yet am I sure that you have not given the true reason of your continuing to linger in Portugal. Oh ! brother, what is it ? What can it be ? I have heard, or rather I have read that a man who loves forgets, forsakes all to follow the object of his passion ; that father, mother, brother, sister are no longer thought of ; nay, that duty, honour, and feeling have been sacrificed at the shrine of love. And can this be ? I have said ; then never let me love, or be again beloved. But forgive, forgive me ; think not that I, for a moment, would entertain a hard thought of one so very dear to me as you are. I know your warm nature, your easy temper, your susceptible heart. I feel, I fear, that you love. Ah !

Osman, reflect—if it is so. Whither can it lead? Where end? A foreigner, a stranger to our altar, you would entail misery on her, on us, on yourself. It can hardly be innocent, such love; but oh! my beloved brother, if it be a love unhal- lowed, fly the fatal snare; break the ignoble bonds; return to us quickly; you will bring back smiles, and peace, and we shall all be happy in our forest home.

“I have a thousand things to tell you of— above all things, I have treasured up for you every word and look of our departed Edward, during his afflicting illness. Many times he spoke of you with tears, at the sad thought, that it was impossible for him to see you before he died. Come, Osman, come to the gentle light of truth and peace. Somers has contrived to shed this blessing over our bereaved circle; and here your fevered spirit will find repose. I long to embrace you.

“Your fondly attached sister,

“HARRIET.”

I tardily obeyed the summons. I took my passage in a vessel, bound for Plymouth, and sailed, with a small fleet under convoy, for England. The weather was fine, the wind fair. It was pleasant to look round on so many sails joyously swelling over home-pointing prows; and I strove to bury in my bosom, and to chase from my mind all the new, strange, and melancholy feelings, with which I was now returning to the dwelling of my fond family.

We had already made the Scilly light, when it came on to blow, accompanied with a thick heavy channel fog. We were driven during the night very far out of our course, lost the convoy, and, in the morning, found, to our alarm and mortification, that we had neared the coast of France. We were espied, chased, and captured by a French frigate, and the same evening I was seated at an hotel in Brest with a party of French officers, partaking of an excellent dinner, and tossing off full glasses of champagne, all sparkling with its bead-like bubbles, and killing, at every bumper, some national prejudice or petty enmity.

The manner in which our small merchant-man was captured by this regular ship of war, though exactly what it must always be, had an air of quiet regularity that abundantly surprised me.

A gun was fired after us — we lay to. Our master walked the deck, wiping away the sweat of vexation from his forehead with the sleeve of his jacket, and cursing, after his own fashion, the wind, the fog, the convoy, and the frog-eating, wooden-shoed mounseers. He became silent, however, as the frigate's boat pulled along side. The man-ropes were put over; he stood himself with a sort of surly, subdued look at the gang-way. A sprightly young French officer stepped upon the deck, and taking out his *tabatière* with the air of a man who has just won his throw, proceeded to snuff in a quick, playful manner, and gather from the captain, through a stammering cabin-boy sort of interpreter, all the particulars of cargo, crew, &c. While thus talking, he cast his eye carelessly round, did not even confine our few seamen, but placed one of his own at the

wheel, distributed the rest among ours, again made sail, and bore up for the coast.

I was the only passenger, the only gentleman on board, and no sooner was I pointed out to him, than he bowed quite ceremoniously, offered his snuff box, shrugged his shoulders; smiled — said something about “la fortune de la guerre,” assured me that I should find France “beau pays” “charmant sejour” “des jolies femmes.” “Ah! ha! spirituelles,” “aimables,” “tres aimables” “et qu’il y avoit du bon vin en France.” “Soyez tranquille, soyez tranquille, vous en serez content, mais tres content, je vous en repond,” was his often-repeated speech. As private property was respected, I suffered no personal inconvenience beyond captivity. To one who was no combatant, and had been taken in the manner in which I had, there was no cause for mortification. Shall I own it? yes — unfilial, barbarous as it may sound, I did not regret the chance which found me a *detenu* among the enemies of my country. I escaped the dreaded return to my peaceful and virtuous

home, from which I felt, in truth, a kind of self-discarded outcast. It is not wonderful, therefore, that I landed on the quay of Brest with the sensations of one who would have sought excitement anywhere, and among polished, and civilized foes expected novelty, amusement, and some diversion to his gloomy unsettled thoughts. I signed my *parole* with very little hesitation. It was at a cold comfortless office; and there was very little form in the ceremony. In a few minutes after, I found myself installed, as a traveller rather than a captive, in the *salon* of the Boule d'Or, as "Milord Anglois," "brave enfant," "bel homme" "et puis riche." The officers of the frigate dined together on shore, and, as our cargo had been a valuable one, and the share of the prize-money would be a something quite good enough to prevent any thought about expence from poisoning the pleasure of their feast, they insisted on my being of the party.

Here, then, was I at the festive board, with Frenchmen; enjoying, and flattering them by

enjoying their exuberant vivacity, and intended nonsense. We adjourned from the table to the theatre, where the *Tartuffe* of Molière was given with a fidelity of natural tone, look, and gesture, which really made half a Frenchman of me before the fall of the curtain.

I was carried by my new companions, with an unresisting facility of disposition on my part, to the gaming-table. This, however, I never can regret; excused as a stranger, and supposed not to have the immediate command of money, though, on all sides, it was offered to me, I stood by a gazer on that scene.

Well have the miserable votaries of the vice of gaming named the place of their insane meetings a hell;—a hell it is; but a cold, cruel, benumbing hell. Cold I call the vice, because it freezes up all the nobler and more generous qualities of man. It seems as if, once under the deadly influence of that fatal passion, man changed his nature, bad as it is, for something worse. The wife, the lovely wife, lies on a lone and widowed couch, watered by her tears;—the innocent child looks up in vain, for a

father's fond caress; — the friend — he has no friend; none that he would not sacrifice at the shrine of the demon whom he worships. How well I recollect the scene; — the eager venturing, the anxious throw, the suppressedly exulting smile, the clenched hand, the bitten lip, the stricken forehead, the pale, motionless despair, the affected calmness, the maddening rage; the restless eye of doubt, suspicion, envy; the out-breaking of hate and defiance; — of this last we had a melancholy example. The very finest-looking young man of our party, stung by his losses, and viewing the smile of the winner as a taunt, insulted him. They withdrew with seconds; we were soon summoned; — alas! it was to see the young hero die, where no fame can crown the bowed head. He lay on a sofa speechless, his vest all red and dark with stiffening gore, his cheek bloodless — he died, and made no sign. From that day I formed a resolution never to touch the dice-box, or the cards in the spirit of a gambler: it is one of the few that I have ever kept; rarely, during the two years I passed in France,

did I even yield so far as to join in that *petit jeu de société*, which was the universal *passe temps* throughout that country.

I was ordered to Blois, a provincial town, where, as chance would have it, I was the only prisoner. It was strange to myself to find how rapidly, how easily I sunk into the artificial, idly busy life, at that time the mode in France. Let me, however, render justice to the French; they are not merely a polite people, but a kind; with tempers invariably good, and dispositions ever most obliging.

They are unfairly reproached with being insincere. It is not so; — they are a warm people, easily excited, and in earnest while they are so; but a flying flower will turn the current of their vain fancies. They are absent from you — forget you; you appear among them again, are kindly remembered, and as kindly treated as ever. Their frivolities are too amusing not to be forgiven. Does the glove of a lady fall to the ground? — it is not picked up; it is snatched with a forcible, a violent, a comic eagerness, as if it were some precious thing,

and to be rescued from the flames. Is she to be led forth to table? — the hand is extended, the head bowed on one side, the body angularly inclined, the foot pointed. — What, are they going to dance a minuet? Not so — but merely to sit down to dinner.

Does your French acquaintance meet you in the morning? — he is *charmè, enchantè* to see you — *avec permission*, is so bold as to take the liberty to ask, if you were amused at the *comédie* the evening before. Does he write you a common note? — he is “with entire devotion, and profound respect,” or “without reserve, and with inviolable attachment, very particularly yours, *et cetera*.” All this is but the custom of the nation, and the stranger has only himself to blame if he attaches more to it than it means.

For a time I enjoyed France; sipped the early *café* — took the *dîner* at noon — was a regular *abonné* at the theatre, and came, and with high spirits, to the delightful *petit souper* afterwards. The French women pleased and charmed me by their vivacity, the freedom,

and fearlessness of their expressions; and I soon discovered, that they were often very absurdly misrepresented, as indifferent or careless guardians of their honour. They will talk prettily and animatedly, whether a heart or a stomacher be the theme; but the downcast eye, the changing cheek, the sinking heart, these true symptoms not only of love, but of passion mingling with love, they laugh at all such things; shew their white teeth, and give the shrug of careless triumph. Their vanity may be gratified; their heart is seldom touched.

During my stay in their cheerful circles I sought and found a forgetfulness of my wretched self.

The *boudoir*, the chamber, the *salon*, — I was constant every where — and with all I was rewarded by being pronounced “spirituel,” “homme d’esprit;” “gai;” “poli;” “tout à fait François.” What mimics, what contemptible mimics men are. I smiled and laughed, was a citizen of the world; but at night, when I was restored to the solitude of my chamber, my heart was heavy and sad; it ached with some

strange want; it spread forth little tendrils on every side, but they could catch no stay, and hung down dead and drooping. On the river's bank, in the lonely ride, in the upward-looking to the bright blue sky, I found some relief; grateful too was the look, and gentle the tone, with which I returned the salutation of the passing peasant; and there was heart and nature in the transient sparklings of joy which beamed from my gladdened features, whenever the black-eyed peasant girl crossed my lone path, and smiled on me. As for the town belles, your *modistes*, *blanchisseuses*, *couturieres*, *filles de chambre*, and the whole race of your calculating smilers, I was like ice to them all. One only anecdote I retain concerning woman, at this period of my life, which, before I change the scene, I will pause to relate.

In the society which I daily frequented, there was one very charming girl, about eighteen years of age, full of elegance, grace, taste, and viva-

city. Did she sit—stand—rise—move,—she was without effort distinguished far above all around her. Every thing she wore became her, so did every thing she uttered. She was a dark, clear brunette, with a flashing eye, and white and even teeth shone dazzlingly from between her beautifully red lips; her shape was perfect; her hand, her foot exquisitely turned. As I recollect her now, she was—she certainly was a very lovely person.

It belonged to my position in their circle that such a girl should smile on me, however unmeaningly; for I was young, a foreigner, a captive; had talent and tact in conversation, and possessed some advantages of person myself. She smiled on me, as I have said; and it belonged to my duty, as it were, to smile again: but I did so, I well remember, with a heart unmoved. I never sought to make any impression on her, for I had nothing of the male coquette about me; and the idea of making impressions for no other end than to reflect back to me my own powers of pleasing, I ever most heartily despised. Jealousy, however, hath eyes that

can, and will see with a strange, and perverse obliquity. After an agreeable evening, passed in one of the cheerful *coteries*, to which I had a general invitation, I was returning, at a late hour of the night, to my lodging, when I heard myself called after, rather loudly and sternly. I immediately turned about. With a hurried and agitated step and mien, a young man approached, whom, although I had often heard him spoken of, I had never, till that evening in the saloon I had just quitted, even seen. He was a noble of Spain.

“You are well overtaken,” said the youth; “draw and defend yourself.”

“You forget yourself, Senhor; I am a prisoner, and unarmed.”

“Right, I had forgotten.” There was a pause; I said not a syllable; at last (and his voice fell, and became sad, and broken as he spoke) abruptly, yet with a slow utterance, he added, “Do you love Julie de Rochefort?”

“Senhor, I think not of her love.”

“But you have it; you have her heart; she looks at you, listens to you, loves you.”

“ I cannot think so ; but why this strange questioning, Senhor ? She smiles on whom she will ; I have no account to render of her smiles ; Senhor, I will not hear you.”

“ Not hear me ! What ; rob me of my all ? Send me forth with a heart beggared of all happiness, of all hope ? Do this, and then not hear me ?—Proud spoiler, but you shall.”

“ Senhor, you rave ; I care not, wish not for her love.”

“ ’Tis false !—’Tis false as hell ! It cannot be that you should gaze, and not admire ; — it cannot be that she should smile, and you not love ; — aye, dote in transport on her matchless charms.”

“ These are but the wild and jealous fancies of a fevered lover. I am not your rival ; I do not love her.”

“ What ! have you whispered flatterings in her ear, and wooed her to your will, — and do you leave her ?”

“ Hear reason ; for heaven’s sake listen. I have neither sought, nor won any, the slightest, interest in her ; and she is pure for me as the un-

sunned snow. Believe me, she cares not for me."

"She does ; she does. I marked the turning gaze ; the beauteous hand that gently pressed upon your willing arm, and the breast that heaved its silent speech of love."

"Your eye deceived your restless mind."

"Ah ! No."

He stood for a moment leaning on his unsheathed sword, silent, and very pale ; big tears gathered in his eyes, and dropped, heavy, and few ; then coming closer, and putting up his sword, he took my hand in his, and holding it very nervously, looked fixedly in my face.

"Be it so. I could have cherished her with a fonder, closer sheltering than mother-bird its unfledged nestling. The light of her smile, the music of her voice, had made this dull world to me a very paradise. It is not to be. Let me look upon you ; you are the husband of her choice. In truth her womb will teem with beauteous images ; yes, angel faces will grow up around your table ; and I, — why I shall be

a lonely thing; shall roam loose on the wide world with a lack-lustre eye; remind her, in your bliss, remind her of this: — I will not part from you in hate. — Farewell," he said, but lingered still; then, coming closer again, in the hoarse whisper of a breaking heart, he added, "I say, young Englishman, make her happy; be sure you make her happy; — happy; make her happy."

Thus as he spoke, he turned, and fled rapidly away.

I had no power to pursue. That manly form; that face of manly beauty; that warrior-eye tear dimmed; and the sable hair that lay profuse on his pale cheek. I can see them even now; I have never forgotten a word of that strange interview.

It was in vain I tried to sleep; I rose with the grey dawn — I knew not where he lodged, and it was long ere I found his hotel; his servants were busied in strapping on trunks to his *calèche*. I asked hastily for their lord: he had already left the city three hours, they said; had started during the night on horseback, and alone.

I waited impatiently for the hour when I might have an interview with Julie. I was quite happy in the thought that I had it in my power to make known, for the noble Spaniard, the deep devotion of his silent love. I pictured to myself her pride — delight; the joy with which she would give to such a man her hand and heart.

At length the moment came; I was admitted to her *boudoir*; I found her robed *en negligée*, all elegance; a parrot perched upon her wrist, picked sugar from her finger; a small Dutch pug sat on the satin cushion by her side looking up at her. I intreated her to put down the bird, as I had something very interesting to impart; she did so with a kind of playful obedience; and all her features brightened with expectation. My heart was warmed — my tongue eloquent — I told the tale burningly — I closed. She burst into a fit of laughter, loud, unrestrained laughter. “And was that all? — The poor man! — and so he was gone to die. — Was that it? — Oh! to die, to be sure. — It would be nothing if he did not kill himself. —

Oh ! it was quite charming — too diverting — she never had been so amused — it was quite impossible to avoid — ha ha ha !” It burst forth again, that devilish laughter, and was echoed to by the sharp bark of her pug, and the scream of her parrot.

I left the *boudoir* — the house — the very town ; took a cottage a mile away from it ; suffered no woman near me, save with the wrinkled aspect of a crone or witch ; read every author that abused the fair sex, and fancied myself a settled hater of them all.

A few friends I, from time to time, admitted, that we might drink deep, and rail against the sex. Some laughed at, and encouraged me in this feeling, as a sort of humourous eccentricity : others, thought me half a barbarian ; but one stern old military man who had greater plainness than his compatriots, could love without caressing you, and esteem you without saying so — one, who had scarcely ever noticed me while I fluttered among the other insects of society — now became my constant visitor, and

so infected me with his own contempt of the world, that I, as worthless a thing as was crawling on it, took up the strain, and became a *soi-disant* misanthrope. But the heart, — how often, how continually was its aching throb contradicting the cold and bitter language of the lip. I panted to love, and be beloved again; the very miseries of love seemed to me to be the welcomed and privileged dwellers in a manly heart.

I looked around the world; there was no eye save Agatha's, to answer my fond gaze, and her's, alas! never might reply to it as my heart desired. Yet, could I see her once again; once more listen to her voice; what ecstasy were even that! Yes, if I could, I would go, and wander seeking till I found her. I would enter the chapel of every convent in Italy; — somewhere I should recognise that voice — that tone never to be forgotten; and if she cruelly refused my prayer; if she proved so resolutely unkind as to deny me even one meeting at the convent grate; still I might haunt the spot her

presence hallowed; live from day to day, fed to my heart's soothing, with the melody of her matin hymnings.

It was at this time, with my mind thus again dwelling constantly on her image, that I first bethought me of the possibility of obtaining my liberty : but how ? my parole — break that ; better die a prisoner ; — and, if I gained my freedom, whither, in duty, honour, and love of the sacred ties of blood and kindred ought I first, and instantly to fly ? — What a changed, humble being I should return to my father's home ; how could I walk about again, amid the stately comeliness of the still forest, and feign a content which I should no longer feel ?

Never, as yet, had I touched upon the precious case of jewels ; — the thought of it came across me pleasingly. It was like the lamp of Eastern fable — the offered wing of the insane mechanic. Already I seemed to wave the pinion, and forgot the lake all black, fathomless beneath. What minister of evil stood ready with the thought, poor and mean in conception, criminal and base in execution, and that was followed

long and often, by cursing judgments? I know not;—but it came, and this it was; to cast away all tie with the controlling world; to give up family, home, country; to cast away the very name given me at my birth; to live alone; to wander, settle, love, depart, responsible to no one; and oh! the wretched sophistry of a deceitful heart, I was still to love—yes, consciously to love! the parents, who begot—the sister who grew with me, the friends who had smiled upon me—the forest haunts where I had laughed and played in early boyhood; from afar, like some wandering spirit, I was to watch, and hold unseen communion with a home for ever quitted. The more I thought of this vile plan, the stronger seemed its wild attraction.

The ragged, beaten boy may fly the threshold of a cruel father, whom he knows and feels but as an exacting task-master, hard and unkind. The man of delicate nerves and quiet loving tastes may fly the uncongenial bitterness of those unhappy minds, which never seek, and cannot know repose. But I who could consort with tender parents, tender friends, all gentle

spirits, who always kissed the rod of God's good government, and found it therefore no whip of scorpions, but a wand of healing virtue, — I, to meditate such a deed! As I look back I shudder. Would I had only meditated. Forthwith I revolved the surest mode of accomplishing my purpose. It occurred to me that Venice would be the most likely place for me to dispose of my jewels with secrecy and safety. I had ample funds for my journey thither; and, providing myself with a false passport under the name of Alvarez, a merchant from Spanish America, I took my measures so well, that I doubt not I was already in Savoy, before my absence from the little *maison de campagne* in which I was in the common habit of secluding myself for days together, was discovered. And here my reader will ask, and I look back, and ask myself — Was it possible that after such an act I could ever enjoy one hour of existence? ever taste of peace? or admit one feeling of delight? — So strangely constituted was my mind, that my hours of bitterness and shame, of sorrow and suffering, though many,

were not unfrequently throughout my after life, checquered by others of a joy, which, though tasted by a guilty thing, I can yet look back upon as pure.

Air and light, wood and water, were not cursed to me. They never are to the veriest wretch that lives. The hot brow is cooled ; the lonely path is cheered ; the cold hand is warmed ; the thirsting lip is moistened ; and all men — sleep.

They were new, and they were glorious, the sensations of delight, with which I traversed the romantic wilds, and vallies of Savoy, — the Alp! ah! it is elevating to look up at it; to see the pure snow on its untrodden summit; to see the patches of green pasturage, won from its craggy side; to see those large dark coverts of the wild wood of nature's planting, which conceal, or soften its stony surface; to see the rivers that run at its foot — here, narrow, deep, and blue — there, broad and shallow, sparkling in mimic waves, or breaking, white with foam,

and brawling loud in solitary places. These sights are mercies; these scenes are a kind of heaven on earth — *on earth*. For, fallen spirits may, and do walk among them, and gaze on them with loving tears, and let their evil passions sleep.

It was at a village in the Maurienne, where I stopped to refresh, that I witnessed a scene, and received an impression, both of which live fresh and cherished in my memory. In the room where I sate, the window faced, at right angles, another in the same *auberge*, which looked more directly on the narrow street. The population of that valley are poor and miserable, alike in their appearance and their circumstances; and, among them, are many objects, yet lower in the scale of human misery, so that *the looking down* to compare lots gives even these poorest of peasants contentment. These poor unfortunates are of two kinds. Sure it is some curse on them, like that which we have seen to visit the children's children of heaven's chosen, but offending race. But I proceed. Some of these poor creatures are called *Goitres*:

a huge unsightly wen, swelling to a monstrous size, stands out, or hangs from their encumbered neck; a complexion of coarse, unwholesome red, a heavy look, and the slow, and sluggish gait of burthened, hopeless misery mark these, and give to them the name and aspect of a race apart. Others there are of sadder form and aspect; these are of dwarfish, stunted growth; but the head is hideously large, and the face broad; a glazed and tightened skin, having the sickly yellow hue of some unwholesome swelling, spreads over it. The eye is large, staring and glassy, with a dull, dead, jaundiced white; and the look is that wondering and wandering which mark the idiot. My heart did sink within me as I gazed on these sad objects, and my bold mind dared ask, Oh! wherefore, wherefore are they thus?—They ask the passing traveller for alms, and many a one turns from them digustedly—some give the open spurning; some (not men themselves), the blow, and they shrink back with the subdued look and the low cowering of the beaten hound. Ladies too, fair sonnet-reading ladies, feel for

the perfumed handkerchief, or trinket-vinai-grette, and turn away the head from them.

I was pondering these things in idle wayward mood, when I observed a young and gentle female approach the window of the inn, and extend her hand with alms to a poor *cretin*, who lay basking under a sunny wall opposite, and who rose at her motion, and went over to receive them. She dropped a piece of silver, but so slowly, into his tattered hat, that I could plainly see the pity moistening her eye was busy in her heart. The poor *cretin* fell upon his knees and gave an idiot laugh, and there was an unusual light in his dull eye. Still she continued to look on him with a sad and pitying kindness, and she was questioning the *filie paysanne* of the rustic *auberge*, who stood bright and cheerful by her side, informing her, as she evidently questioned her, about the poor wretch below. Yes, incomparable angel! then I knew thee not. Little I marked thy comeliness, for the moral charm did shine so brightly in thy piteous looks, that I did think of heaven, not earth, as I then gazed on thee.

In two or three minutes she left the window; but the *cretin* remained with his eyes fixed on the apartment, not beggingly, but wonderingly. Presently his eye fell upon the carriage standing near the door, without horses. Next he went round to the stable, then back, and away with a quick step, and a light look. The party, consisting of an elderly gentleman much wrapped up, and apparently in feeble health, a lady of like age, and this interesting girl, came out, to enter their carriage, just as the breathless *cretin* returned. He had a nosegay of wild flowers in his hand, and in a small open box of pasteboard a few stones, that sparkled; picked probably from some brook, or grot in the neighbourhood. He ran, and held them up to his benefactress. She took the nosegay with a kind smile. Still, as the coach was starting, he held up his little treasure of shining pebbles and spars, as the more costly offering of his gratitude, with eager, unintelligible utterings. But, when the wheels were fairly in motion, and passed him by, and left him with his rejected gift standing in the way alone, he threw down

his stones in the mud, and shook his large head, and sunk into the same dull, sickly look as ever. Poor wretch! he felt an angel nature near him, and would have worshipped. Go, sad child, go play with the dancing sun-beam in the glittering brooks; pluck the wild thyme; catch the loud grasshopper; and make music with the harsh cow-horn. Thy knowledge and thy tastes are nearer ours, than ours to those of the lowest of created intelligences, that flit invisibly around us. Thy heart less evil perhaps than the very best, and most considered among us all. Poor creature! you cross the path of some cold being who travels in search of pleasure, and, as he can find in you nothing to give a light sensation to his heartless bosom, he takes forth his perishable tablets, and notes you down, an object horrible, a reality disgusting. What tricks men play before high heaven! But I check me here; whom can I, whom dare I to judge? I, a self-exiled wanderer, forgetting, giving up home and home's love, leaving them to mourn and wonder for a last and only son, lost to his parent's arms.

At leaving Chamberry, for the better enjoying the scenery of the route, I had begun to travel on horseback, and continued so to journey till I reached Turin.

It was a dull afternoon, when I quitted the hamlet of Lanslebourg to ascend Mont Cenis, intending to sleep, that night, at the *hospice* on the mountain's top where I calculated I should arrive about the set of sun. It was a long, winding ascent, steep, narrow, and stony; and a great part of it lay among forests of the black and lofty pine. I had scarcely made a third of my way up when the sky became like a vast funeral pall; like it too with a fringing of shining white; a white, cloudy, sun-lighted edge. For a while all was still; and then awoke the winds — blew strong, and with a growing fierceness. Every object, as I looked around, foretold a storm; such a one as desolates on land. The cloaking traveller; the horse with arched neck, and ears erect, and streaming mane, suspicious and affrighted; the goat down-leaping from his pinnacled and craggy play-places; the scarf of the hooded peasant woman out-blown; the long grass

wild waving ; the rustle of foliage ; the bending of branches, and even the strong stateliness of the pine trembling ; all spoke warnings to the eye and ear. Nor slept the thunder long ; — it broke upon an awful pause in the rude gusts — broke loudly — fearfully, as if the pillared frame of heaven would fall. From the black sky's horrid rifts burst the dread lightning ; now white and sheeted, of most blinding brightness ; now blue and arrowy, the suddenest dart of angry death ; and rain, deluging rain descended, and the rushing blast drove it in slanting torrents ; and tall trees brake their stiff crowns, or were uprooted, and laid flat on the wet earth. It raged long and furiously. I had early dismounted, and my horse had broke away in terror. I had leaned against the hugest pine long ere any fell ; but the vivid lightning struck, and cleft, and blasted it, leaving me terrified, despised, pitied, and unharmed near the ruined trunk of it. I ran to where one solitary projecting crag offered a shelter, but though it covered me, yet the mighty superincumbent mass seemed, all the while, to frown and menace me. I could not

remain beneath it, but ran out to a naked, barren, stony spot, and sate me crouching down till the storm should spend its fury. I had snatches, as it were, of a deep, sublime, and trembling, awful delight, at the dread magnificence of this strife of nature, but the predominant feeling was terror—such as mid the yawning waves, and upon the quaking earth, I had known already. Ye gazers on a storm from the closed casements of the fire-warmed study, come, and abide its pitiless pelting. Poets, and men of science, come to the scathed pine in the Alpine forest, and tremble as I have done.

Gradually the violence of the storm abated; but the whole night passed so foul and stormy, that I could not even stir. Towards morning the rain ceased, and the wind fell away, and there was a calm. In the still gray dawn, I found my horse standing, not far away, with drooping head, and hind legs bent under him, and broken bridle; and on again I toiled, driving him before me. It was bitter cold, and the jewel case, which was very small, and which I carried about my person for safety, struck chill upon

my bosom. It seemed a load too — a heavy guilty load; but the die was already cast; I would not throw it from me. At length I reached the *Hospice*, and was dried, and warmed, and fed; and slept through the long day, and on again through a refreshing night; and, when the sun was high, and shone brightly on the snows, and beamed on the blue lake that mirrors back the high, encircling peaks around, I again set forward. Down to the base of Cenis, amid those sounds and sights the traveller loves, I rapidly descended; falling waters made voices to my ear; all things looked fresh and green; the tree, the bush, the plant, the blade of grass were glistening as they dried their wholesome tears; birds sung, and every passing muleteer was carolling for joy. And thus I entered Italy; and, traversing little mountain valleys, among wood-fringed hills, with spires of rock, with castle too, and monastery placed boldly on their lofty jagged tops, I journeyed gaily on; till, from an opening, commanding point, I looked far out upon sunny plains, pleasant with green fields, and shining rivers, with herds and

flocks far seen in quiet motion, and, amidst these scenes so fair — life, human life — the city, spreading white, and towering high, and small brown hamlets scattered near groves and sparkling streamlets. Surely such a sight may innocently gladden. It is very sweet to rest on a lone, lofty spot, and look down upon a place of habitations: we feel, or fancy that we love the unknown inmates — but love will never work its neighbour ill; yet down we go, and chase away their happiness and peace and innocence, with wants and wars and every guilty appetite that passion prompts. I too did this — went, revelled where the smiler wooed, fresh from the storm that shook me with its terrors, and drenched me shivering cold. I basked me in heaven's sun, and, like the serpent at the woodman's fire, was ready with my restless sting to pierce the pitying hand that chafed my frozen form, and warmed me back to life.

I made but a short delay in fair Turin, or wealthier Milan, but hastened on to Venice, the place whither I was hurrying to seal my miserable fate by an act of wicked wilfulness; where

I was to purchase the guilty freedom of a lone, wandering life; a state of existence that was "exclusion from mankind."

Immediately on my arrival, I contrived, with some art and address, (for with the possession of wealth, I had already learned these noble ways), so to offer my jewels for sale, that two or more of the most considerable merchants should become secret, yet rival bidders for the purchase of them. Thus learned I, almost tremblingly, that their value was at the lowest two hundred thousand gold sequins of Venice—a sum that promised affluence for life. I sold them, and lodged the proceeds in a way so safely and secretly, that, be where I might, thenceforth to my order, and only mine, could any payment be made, we agreeing on a particular form, and a private mark to every bill. Such secret arrangements were very common once in Venice, and the merchant of that city could, even in her latter day, give to the monied stranger bills on correspondents scattered all over the globe. Behold me, then, wealthy and alone; free to will and to do; to desire and to

enjoy : — and all this, too, in Venice, a vast palace for pleasures and fairy revels ; — among sirens, too, whose very tones are like the “sweet and swan-like voice of dying pleasure,” whose dark bright eyes look out from the white *faldettas* dazzlingly ; — amid scenes, too, where no rude sounds invade, where you are borne about with little of toil to any one — for light is the labour of the gondolier. Gentle, and fast his oar dips in the smooth water path ; and, as you recline and look around, no cursing drivers, or flogged and staggering cattle are heard or seen in the still city.

“ Venice was made for smiles. For a few days I must I will be happy — let me begin to-day. How beautiful, how very beautiful all things look ! Why, the very water seems painted ! Palace and temple, and slow-waving flags, and idle crowds, and coloured garbs, all mirrored clearly on the glassy surface ! ” Thus exclaiming, I gazed, transported, around me, and lightly and swiftly we skimmed along the grand canal ; and now, quitting it, we came out into those wider waters that spread before the small

square or quay of St. Mark, where, on a lofty ancient trophy column, the winged lion walks in bronzed pride — walks as in act to fly. Near this place stands the ducal palace, with its crowded arches; its two grandly ornamented central windows, with canopies of stone, figures and bas-reliefs below; its roof, all bordered with a rich and pointed fret-work. Guards sauntered beneath; nobles stood in the balconies; vast numbers of gondolas were gathered round the quay, and several open barks, with men and women of the lower classes rapidly filling them; while, farther out from the shore there lay some boats of strange, fantastic forms, with prows, and prow-like sterns, high curving, and carved with ornaments; the one all shells; the other flowers; another again fruits; and richly gilded all, with silken flags, and gay dressed rowers, and music in them, and songs, and all the happy noises of a holiday.

As we came near to the quay, while pausing for our turn to get in towards the landing-place at the marble steps, the Gondolier said “The Senhor is lucky in arriving at this season. It

is a regatta to-day ; a fine thing for the Senhor to see. After the high mass all Venice will be on the water — the Doge, and the nobles, and all the fair damas. If the Senhor will but just step up into St. Mark's he will hear the high mass, and I will go up with him, or wait for him on the quay ; — my comrade will stay with the gondola."

" Thanks, friend, I will go, but alone : but tell me what is that little high screened bridge between the walls of the Doge's palace, and those of the fine building next to it ?"

" Oh, that, — it is the Bridge of Sighs."

" The what ?"

" The Bridge of Sighs."

" What ! are there any sighs in Venice ?"

" Aye, Senhor, and tears too ;" and then he sung again his merry air, and broke off to bid me look at a passing bark, where a fat monk was shaking with laughter at a clown and a harlequin, who were playing off their tricks and antics in the same boat.

" But the bridge, my friend ; why do they call it the Bridge of Sighs ?"

“Why, because that great building is the prison ; and it is in the palace all prisoners are judged ; and in those dungeons they suffer ; and, as they must pass that bridge, ’tis thought they sigh as they look out upon our pleasant city. This is as I have heard, Senhor ; but, in truth, they might as well call that broad and public one below another bridge of sighs, for there is many a breast leans on it, for hours together, that has a broken heart bleeding within, as the eye looks up to the one above ; but then you know, Senhor, one can’t see any one through a stoneblind, so it is but making one’s self unhappy for nothing ;” — and again he cheerily sung, and, making in between the crowded boats, he brought me close to the landing-place. I got out, and walked into the noble square of St. Mark, and looked at the proud cupolas, and glittering mosaics, and at the very large and superb standards of the republic which, now slowly out-floating, now heavily down-flapping with their weight, hung on tall red crowned masts in front of the great church.

The square was thronged with gay dresses,

and cheerful faces ; and, though the thought of the Bridge of Sighs came up, like a little vision of clouds and sorrow to the mind's eye, I dismissed it, and looked at all about me with joy, or something very like it.

All the pleasures which wealth could command, to gild or cheat the passing hour, would now surely be mine, for I was rich ; that very morning I had seen my banker's treasury, the bags of money, the ingots, the jewels, the heaps of glittering coins. I grew avaricious as I looked on them ; but I hugged myself in the mean thought that I was wealthy too. As I passed along the arcade, I saw disposed on a wall some prints. I was attracted by a fine one, coloured, of a Hebe, all radiant with bright looks and blooming cheeks, and the lightning-clutching eagle all fiery-eyed and fiercely tame, feeding from her fair hand. I stopped to examine it ; but my eye was instantly rivetted, as if by fascination, on another that hung just below it.

This last was a Dutch engraving ; there sate two misers in furry caps and thread-bare robes, with spectacles on nose, and money-scales in their

trembling fingers, and the table between them was loaden with treasure ; here, loosely heaped, there, tied up and sealed in short, thick, heavy-looking bags,— gold — all gold ; and the old men were fingering it, and looking on it with the cold, hard, cruelly exulting smile of avarice : but above, at a little window, high in the wall, looking in on them and on their pastime, was another figure — Death, with his fleshless jaws, and changeless grin ; and he thrust forth the long bony arm of his dread anatomy, grasping an hour glass, with the sand fast falling, nearly gone ; and a scroll curled out from it, and you could just read thereon the words, “ Thou fool, this night.” I turned away — felt like that king fabled by our mighty moralist, who had dared for ten days to say, “ To-morrow I will be happy.” I slowly paced back my thoughtful path, mid crowds of thoughtless laughers, to my gondola ; I sat under my coffin-canopy a dull-eyed gazer. The waving kerchiefs, and the encouraging cries, and the loud signal sounds that, on all high festivals, mimic the voice of war, as if to mock his

distant terrors ; — I heard and saw them all, but little heeding.

I found a table awaiting me, at my return, covered with delicacies, and the choicest wines were sparkling in crystal vases. I sickened at the sight ; a something tasteless I ate ; a something strong I drank ; — but I was *alone*.

I looked out from the casement, and saw two beggar-brats at play ; and the ragged father sat sunning under the wall, and laughing at them with a parent's pleasure ; and there was a gray old man in rags, smiling at what that father said ; and I could plainly judge, from features, that three generations, all rags and cheerfulness, were below me there. Ah ! then how my heart smote me ; — alone — I had sealed my own fate — even so — had sold myself to solitude — sold away my parentage of heart, as well as name and blood and country. Sold all this ! and for what ? “ This night, thou fool.” For what ? — the tasteless banquet, and the aching heart. Agatha ; — that way, indeed, some hope lay ; pillowed on her bosom I could be — I was sure I could

be — happy. I would hunt, and find, and wed her ; — but here she was not : and at the moment, my thoughts could find no rest ; the very menials would laugh contemptuously at the solitary board — the chaste bed — the wine cup which none other pledged.

The remembered things, too, — the storm — the dream — the earthquake — the sale of myself — the sinful hoard — and, the last spur to my poor mean soul, the engraving with its gaunt and threatening mocker, “Thou fool, this night.” It was too much for me to bear. Where did I go for comfort ? — I remember well my loud wild cry. Strange, that through, my life such scenes as have impressed me remain ! — the very looks, the words, the dialogues, the breaks, the order of them, and the manner of the speakers, as when I spoke and saw, and listened.

“What ho !” — My new and ready slave came cringing up. “Pleasures, friend, I want pleasures ; — see that I have them abundantly. I shall not stay long in your city, and must taste the sweets of it. Bid the gondola go wait at the stairs of the great theatre, and give me my

cloak and sword ; I shall walk thither alone. Look to my orders ;—pleasures.” So speaking, I remember well, I wrapped my cloak around me, and, threading narrow lanes and crossing marble bridges, pursued my way with that hasty dissatisfaction which is still not inconsistent with an eager expectation of finding some light diversion, to drive away our angry temper and low spirits.

It was in the last long lane, which leads to the opera house, and which, at the moment, was nearly empty, that I was asked for alms. The beggar was a woman very thinly clad, with a limping gait, and a wan, cold, suffering look. With a wild earnestness, she asked thus, “It is for more besides me; others at home, who are sick and starving. For the love of the most holy virgin, Senhor, your charity.” The rich wear no purses. My box already taken, I had no money on my person. Return a mile? — Impossible; besides it might be—very likely was—all an imposition, a trumped-up tale of woe. The whispering eagerness of her first petition changed to a piercing articulate beseeching, in the cry tha.

followed me. I did not like it ; I felt a something in my bosom between the warmth of pity, and the coldness of incredulity ; but indolence gave its full weight to the latter feeling, and I walked on with escaping speed to — *the theatre*.

The curtain rose : nothing could be more joyously brilliant than the music. The opera was all of serenading, and stolen meetings, and duped guardians, and cheerful love-making. The *prima donna* was a sparkling stage beauty, practising every lure that innocence does not know. There was a ballet too after it ; all arm-entwining and graceful bendings ; and the sway, the pretty sway of that fly-away-follow-me sort of tripping ; and the amorous glances and the close embrace ; and garlands and shawls held up by snowy arms in fanciful festoons ; and lively airs throughout the whole action of the ballet.

I sat lounging in my box, and gazed steadily at the stage, and heard the music ; but the beggar's form was before me ; her cry in my ear the whole evening. The moment the curtain fell, I went back with the slow step of shame, but with an inward eagerness, to look for the un-

fortunate. She was nowhere to be found. I walked all about the city. It was a very chill, but a clear night. I could not find her. I asked of other beggars. "What? a lame, pale, poor-looking woman?"—"Oh, there were *many such*." Still I walked on. A cloaked cavalier, walking by night in Venice, would not be guessed as on an errand of mercy; therefore I could not wonder, though I swore at and spurned them, that numbers of base men and old hood-wearing hags should pluck me by the sleeve, and bid me follow where loathing and reluctant beauties lay waiting for the hated but fawned-on purchaser.

I returned to my apartments harassed and unhappy. I lay me down, and as I felt sleep stealing on my eyelids, blessed, with a broken thanksgiving, the coming mercy.

It was noon when I awoke: my slumbers had been deep, dreamless, and refreshing. Although the sun shone bright, yet there was a pleasant air abroad that stirred and freshened all the waters; like diamond cuttings on the finest glass,

they gently rose, and the surface ruffled into a sparkling beauty. It were difficult to look on such a scene, and not to feel its gladdening influence.

I passed the whole day in my gondola. Temple, and palace, I visited with eager mind, and gazed, and was beguiled.

The evening came ; the current of my blood had flowed cheerfully all the day ; I partook of my repast with appetite ; a party of itinerant musicians regaled me, as I sate, with sounds ; society it was ; for music, aye, the very simplest, the very rudest, is society ; brings up long trains of images in faithful harmony ; if it makes you sad, you feel that you are but sympathizing with numbers — yes — if the air be old, and popular, with countless numbers — the living and the dead — with him or her who first composed or sung it ; with the very being, on whose real sorrow a fine imagination dwelling, first breathed forth the melody — and last, with all soft yielding listeners, willing to lend themselves to innocent illusion ; if again the strain be glad, and joyous, in like manner with thousands are

you rejoicing, and your mind's eye is looking out on all the happy, among your fellow men, with smiles. At night I again attended the Opera ; again I passed through the recollected lane, but looked around in vain, for the figure I would have seen ; however, I felt consoled by the thought, that I did, in heart, most earnestly desire again to meet her, and that, when I did so, I would bountifully assist her.

The theatre was brilliantly lighted up in every part, for it was again the evening of a festival, and all the company were now in masks ; not a syllable could you hear of the performance, except, when, for some very favourite air, there was a momentary hush ; immediately after, all again was the happy buzzing of a delighted crowd, like that of gathering bees on some rich, exhaustless bed of honey-giving flowers.— Well ; I could not but feel pleasure. The masks rambled to all parts of the house. The doors of those boxes, where some of the more noble and known patrons sate to receive them, were opening and shutting every minute, to admit new, or exclude departing visitors. My

own, where I thought to have been alone, was soon filled from curiosity; visitors came and disappeared in quick succession. I retired, and returned again in a domino and mask. There was no great variety of dress or character — very little attempt at sustaining parts; one or two ran about full of comedy and frolic, in the dress of Venetian clowns; but for the rest, Turks, Jews, Shepherds, Shepherdesses, and a few in the rich old costumes of Spain and Italy, wandered about talking with much life and animation; a few, perhaps, joking with each other in feigned voices, but the many in their own. To me, however, the scene had all the charms of novelty, and I looked on as forgetful of self and sorrow, for the moment, as I could desire. It was a new form, in which to study the wonderful, and expressive beauty of the human countenance. Never does the mouth of woman appear to such enchanting advantage, as when it plays, with every variety of expression, beneath the black, mysterious mask; the ruby lip, and the pearly treasure, and the wreathed dimples, and the little soft white rounded chin;

these certainly are charming features, seen never in so great perfection, as when they laugh below in contrast with the black mask above. Many were the playful questionings I had to parry; at last one female mask invited me to quit my seat, and led me, all carelessly submissive to her guidance, to many of the gayest boxes. — In one I could not but remark she affected a kind of intimacy with me, which was designed to provoke the jealousy of some anxious lover. He was readily betrayed, even to me a stranger; his attempts to disguise his voice all failed him; his assumed character fell, and the love-despising lordly Turk faltered from his swelling tones into the sighing slave. She left the box with triumphing smiles upon her pretty lip, and whispering to me to conduct her to her gondola, implied her syren invitation.

Already was I in the very act of entering the boat, when the recognized form, the wan pale form of the beggar woman stood before us, and asked alms. It was with a peevish heartless tone that my fair companion bade her begone —

sternly I frowned upon an act, which, after all, was but a counterpart of mine, the night before. Thus judge we of each other. My blood had been warmed to libertine tumult; it froze upon the instant — I held out my arm for her to step into her gondola alone — bowed, and turned away — and as I turned, I marked the lip, but late so soft and wooing in its beauty, now bitten pale; she did not speak, but taking off her mask, displayed a face, and smiled. The curling nostril, the glowing cheek, the eye of lightning, and the marble of her high forehead, all stained with black and bursting veins, spoke the unutterable rage of woman scorned. I shrunk from her awful, horrid beauty; and felt as chill as though that fabled head with serpent locks were gazing me to stone. I turned, and taking out my purse, gave it hastily to the astonished and grateful beggar. The very tone of her thankfulness was restoring, and rewarding; — deep, sincere, and wondering, she fell upon her knees, and blessed the Virgin; and she prayed (vain prayer) that my life might be happy.

“ Ah !” said a gondolier, as she rose up, and

limped feebly away, "that's real charity — I remember the day, Senhor, when the first lord in Venice would have given purse upon purse for the smile of her."

"Why, who was she, friend?"

"The first dancer in all Italy, and used to come sometimes for a season here, and I have seen her many a time in this very theatre close by; ah! many a time; but she has been unlucky, Senhor — she was away a long time, in some foreign country; and she came back here poor, and a cripple, and they were good to her at first, some of them; but she has lost her best friend, that gave her a home, and made those whom he knew give her charity, and maintain her poor soul — and now she begs. Whenever I have a good day of it on the canals, and meet her, why I always give her a trifle, and that's more than the gentry do, that ever I saw, saving yourself, Senhor."

"Do you know where she lives?"

"Yes, Senhor."

"Then be here with your gondola at noon to-morrow."

I punctually kept my appointment; it was a very still, hot day—in all the smaller canals, where there were few boats passing to and fro, and no current, the water was covered with scum and filth, unsightly to look upon, and breeding the most unwholesome sickly smells. In one of the very narrowest, and most filthy, my gondolier stopped before some broken wooden steps, leading to a worn threshold, in a doorless house, and called “Gianetta;”—a little ragged child immediately echoed “Gianetta,” at the top of his shrill voice, but there was no answer. We got out, and entered the poor dwelling. In a small dark chamber, with paper-mended lattice, opening to the opposite wall in a narrow lane, we found Gianetta—she was kneeling over a pan of charcoal, on which was an earthen pot filled with soup, which she was busied in simmering with a wooden spoon. A yellow visaged, dying man lay breathing loud, and with pain, on a straw mat covered with a blanket; on another, by his side, a fine pale woman was sitting up, and giving the loose hanging breast to a little infant

newly born, while three children, of tender ages, stood near the fire, eying the steaming broth, and one, the youngest, was eating a piece of bread, and holding up a little broken bit to the mouth of poor Gianetta, who was shaking her head kindly, as we do at a babe we love. This grouping our entrance disturbed; Gianetta rose, and then again would have kneeled to repeat her thanks — I held her up from this undue expression of her gratitude.

“Senhor,” said she, “your bounty has saved us all. I have already got other lodgings for my poor sufferers, and when I have strengthened them with a little nourishment, they shall be moved.”

The speechless man looked at me with tearful eyes, and the woman, who gave suck, hugged her poor infant closer, and broke out into such thanks as mothers give for children saved.

Warm blood came rushing all about my heart. I felt a momentary, permitted joy. I went to see the new hired abode, and engaged a better still; I sent for a doctor, and bade the gondolier see that it was a kind one; I staid

and had them removed under my own eye; saw them in clean, and wholesome chambers, and in comfortable beds, and then returned home, and took my lonely meal in quiet thankfulness. When it was dark I went out into my balcony, and sate looking on the stars, and, at times, down on the dark, and mirror-like canals, which reflected, in their still depths, these distant planets, as if they too were lighted up below with the same pale rays of gold, which softly shine above us, and gem the dark sky when night is black around.

Lost in deep musings many hours rolled by. Fewer, and fewer, were the straying lights, which flitting on the waters, and casting on them flashing gleams, marked the late returning gondolas — at last all was motionless and silent.

Was it a phantasy of the o'erwrought brain? No; — dreams are to the dreamer realities; such was this waking dream, this vision of the night to me.

She came — Agatha! — in form, in loveliness, in array, the same, the very same I had

first seen her. She stood, tall, in a self-guided bark. She gazed up at me, as it slowly glided beneath, upon the black water. I heard again the well remembered air, sung too by the voice of Agatha, — but not *this* Agatha; — these lips were closed — this gaze was a fixed, a silent gaze. — It ceased, that well-known, much loved strain, and there was no longer bark, or Agatha — a light sheet of mild and lambent flame shone where that boat had passed. — I looked up eagerly to the heavens, and I saw a bright star, very bright; it moved; beamed, for a moment, with the lustre of a million gems; then shot adown the lighted sky, and vanished.

Instantly a damp chilliness siezed me, ran through my frame, with swiftness, and struck to my heart like the icy sceptre of death — and a requiem, I heard a requiem distinctly, solemn, and sad, and regular: — the deep low tones of chanting priests, and the notes of pity breathed sweet and mournfully by women. When at length the silence of the night succeeded to these strange, bodiless voices, I hurried to my couch, and placed a bright,

ourning lamp on the marble bracket near, and slept brokenly, and fitfully, till the welcome dawn.

Agatha was dead — I could not doubt it; — she was in her “cold grave withouten company.” My love! — My love!

I paced my chamber desolately restless; — the day wore on; — the sun of noon shone down; its rays pierced every where, and illumined all things. I could not close the shutters; I could not bear or solitude or darkness. I went forth to visit the sufferers whom I had relieved. The poor sickly man, and the lately delivered mother lay sleeping. Their deep slumbers were such as God comforts with, and certainly it was with a secret satisfaction that I looked upon the soft beds, and the white sheets, and the shading curtains. The poor woman Gianetta sate in the adjoining chamber at work, and the little children were lying near her clean and quiet.

She was full of gratitude, and I availed myself of her warmth to ask the circumstances, which had thus reduced her; saying, that I had heard, not without extreme surprise, that she had, in her day, been very celebrated through-

out Italy as a leading dancer at the opera. She frankly complied ; but yet, after promising her entire confidence freely, she sighed, and remained silent, for many minutes ; then she looked at me quietly smiling through tears, which were gathering, but which she dashed resolutely away, and thus related her brief history.

Gianetta's Tale.

“ You have indeed, Senhor, been rightly informed. A few years ago, I was well known, as the first dancer at the grand opera at Naples, and I have also appeared in many other large cities with no small success. I was born, Senhor, among the poor, the happy poor, lowly in condition, but rich in the fewness of their wants. My father was a Neapolitan peasant of the better class, and was the considered owner of a small farm, a vineyard, and a wine press, on that pretty height, which rises just above the small old town of Pozzuoli. Pozzuoli is near Baia, Senhor, a very beautiful spot ; there

is a little bay on either side of it, and there are many ancient ruins near it. But Baiæ is a very famous place, — all travellers know it, — you have seen it perhaps.”

“ Never, but I have heard, and read of it.”
“ Well, Senhor, if ever you do visit it, you will say that there are few scenes in the world more lovely ; and, it was in that scene that I was born, and on that scene my young eyes first looked, and made acquaintance with this world. My father, as I have said, was but a peasant : a fine, handsome, happy looking man. My mother was a Sicilian ; my father met and married her at Messina, whither he went for a few months one summer, in the service of his young lord ; but, at the death of my grandfather, he gave up his service, and took possession of the paternal farm. My mother was of a very fair complexion, and had very high joyous spirits ; in all things I was said to resemble her very strongly : our family was large ; I was the first born, the pride, the pet. Of my earlier years I retain no more particular recollection, than that I was happy every day, and all day ; and that,

on Sundays and saints' days I was as fine, as a bright coloured boddice, and a silver crucifix, and ribbons in my glossy hair, could make me ; and that a kind and laughing mother dressed me. I was pretty too — a very pretty child, and had a sweet temper — no wonder — every body smiled on me ; I never asked for anything that it was not given, and with pittings on my cheek ; never, therefore, had I any thing that I was not ready to give. I was taught nothing but to read, and to learn, by heart, the paternoster, and some prayers, and hymns to our blessed Lady, and the holy St. Januarias, and the Santa Agatha of precious memory. Once a week all the children were catechized in the cloister of the church, just before vespers. The pastor was a kind, silly old man, whom we all laughed at, and were playfully fond of, and practised our sportive tricks on — so I learned nothing.

“ My whole time was passed in doing the gentle biddings of my busy mother ; that is, in following her about, and cheering rather than helping her, as she set our little dwelling in order, or gathered the vegetables for our light

repasts ; or laced on her best boddice, and put her long hair into a pink Sicilian net for the Sunday's mass ; — else I was abroad among others of my age ; — if it were hot, sitting in the shade of walls, or trees, and playing with bricks and shells, and pebbles for our toys, or peeping into our paper prison full of painted butterflies ; — if it were the cool evening hour, I was leading my little troop of playfellows, and dancing at their head, to the noisy music of my Sicilian tamborine, and tossing back the fine thick tresses of my dark brown hair as they fell over my laughing eyes.

“ Not very far from our cottage, in a vineyard, belonging to my father, stood the noble ruins of an ancient Roman amphitheatre ; and, below it, again, the marble remains of an old temple of Jupiter. I well recollect my early, and timid explorings in the arched and echoing passages of the amphitheatre, and among the columns of the temple ; but, as soon as use had taken away our fear, they were the favourite play places of myself, and my young companions, and there we might always be found.

“I remember the very stones suggested to us some of our prettiest games ; one in particular ; there stood against a wall, a large fragment of a fallen frieze with figures on it ; a Bacchante dancing and playing on a timbrel, and several following with Thyrsi, and a car with Bacchus and Ariadne, and little children clustering round it, with festoons of flowers, and forms in drapery with lyres, and others with baskets of fruit.

“Little I thought, when, as a blooming child, with mimic pride, I strove to imitate the graceful action of that player of the timbrel, and gave my little playmates rods, with vine leaves tied about them, and to make garlands for our sport gathered and strung all wild flowers that I found ; little I thought, to what those cheerful hours were leading.

“It was on the fine evening of a very hot day, during the season of the vintage, just in the rich, red glow of the sunset hour, that I led my little troop of child-bacchanals, across the vineyard, to the amphitheatre.

“My father, and other labourers, and the boys

were standing on ladders, gathering the grapes from the loaded festoons, and they stopped to gaze on us, and threw us clusters; and we ate of them, and stained ourselves with their red juice, and then danced on again.

“That evening I remember there were two strangers seated among the ruins. It was not an unusual sight. We often saw gentlemen and travellers there, and they always gave us the good-tempered, laughing “*viva*” of encouragement. We passed them, therefore, as we were wont, with fearless smilings and a wilder dancing. These strangers rose up, and called us to them; and one, a very old man, asked me many questions of my name, and age, and parents, and gave me a small silver coin. Then they bade us go play again — we did; but yet, I remember, not exactly as before; not so light-heartedly; not so naturally; — no — I may truly say that I never *played* again.

“The very next day that old gentleman, and a fine lady of middle age, came to our cottage, and spoke with my mother, and sent for me. The lady greatly praised my beauty, and asked to

see me dance, and play my tamborine. Sillily, and blushing, I trilled my noisy play-thing, and made some awkward boundings; but I was not at ease. My fate, however, was sealed; it was to be; the Senhora was charmed; I was divine — beautiful — the very thing — a year's instruction, and I should be the first dancer in Naples — La Morelli would be nothing to me. As all this was uttered, I was held round the waist by the lady, who parted the locks above my forehead, and called me a Venus, a Psyche, and many other extravagant endearing names, of which I knew not then the meaning, and the old gentleman looked at me, with a glass, as if I were a statue, or a painting, and gave me another piece of silver. At last they went away; but the lady said she was determined that I should come, and visit her, and that she would be my friend; and she took a little pink shawl from her own neck, and threw it playfully over mine, and gave me a kiss.—Certainly she rather won me. She was handsome, and her voice was soft, and her manners were kind. After some hesitation on the part of my

father and mother, through a cousin of his at Naples, who kept a mercer's shop, and who strongly advised the measure, the affair was arranged, and I was taken from my humble, my happy home, to be brought up for the stage.

“I remember the last evening that I passed in my father's cottage: we sate out upon the stone bench, before the door, under the old trelliced vine; and a young neighbour came to see us, a youth of sixteen; one, who had used to be my play-fellow, till, as he grew, he became called on to labour; but still, upon saints' days and holidays, he had always a choice nosegay for his little Gianetta; and if he went with his mules to the great city, he was sure to bring me back a new ribbon.

“I do not think that he knew, or I knew, or had ever dreamed any thing about love. He was always wont to sing for us bright merry ditties; but he did not that evening: always to laugh too; but he did not that evening: he tried indeed, but I could see into his heart, and see that it was sad, and I felt mine sad; a sensation quite new to me, and sweeter, I

thought, than any I had ever known before. He could not talk even; but he sate, and played on his guitar some broken notes of half remembered airs, and simple voluntaries; and we all listened silently, and I could hear my own heart throb. He lingered till it was late; and when the old people went in, still lingered, kissed me, and cried, and said I should forget him, and sobbed as he walked slowly away; and I cried after he was gone, and could not sleep for sorrow and thinking. Ah! poor Giuseppe — I dare to say I should have married Giuseppe.

“The next morning was very wet, and I rather hoped that the lady would not send for me that day; one other holiday at home — one more — but it was not to be. There came a letiga for me with an old female servant. My father and mother stood looking when I got in, as if all were done in spite of their fonder love, and better judgment. I felt doubting, and reluctant myself, and it pained me to hear my little brothers and sisters asking “why does sister go?” “where does sister go?” Never did mule-bells sound so sad to me before, as when we moved

off along the road. It was in vain the old servant tried to cheer me. All the young children, my playfellows, stood in the lane, and said "viva Gianetta," but not cheerfully, for they were sorry, and stood surprised, and looked long after me; and upon the hill above, I saw Giuseppe alone, leaning against the fragment of an old column -- poor Giuseppe."

Here she paused in her narrative; then recovering herself with some effort, thus resumed it.

"The lady to whom I went, was the greatest patroness of the theatre, and was the wife of a rich nobleman. The old gentleman I spoke of was a kind of *cicisbeo*, or rather her *cicerone*, liked and encouraged for his talents; in all matters of taste he guided her judgment; on the merits of the poem, the song, the statue, the painting, his was always the opinion appealed to, and the deciding voice.

"I was at this time just thirteen, and ripening into that slight fulness of form, and roundness of limb which in that climate mark the early passing from girl into woman. Well, Senhor, they kissed me, my lady patroness, and other ladies;

and dressed me in fine clothes ; and plaited my peasant-braided hair afresh, and curled more gracefully my flowing wavy ringlets ; taught me, moreover, how to whiten and soften my village hands ; how to sit, to move, to stand, to look, to bend, and then—to dance, they taught me. What wonder if I grew vain of beauty ? I did : I gained, too, the grace and lightness of a sylph. Soon, too soon, I was seduced from all my village tastes. My dress, my food, my couch, the carriage to convey me, the sights, above all the operas, and the brilliant ballets, combined to destroy all the easily satisfied, innocent simplicity of the country girl.

“ I quite panted for the moment when I was to appear myself upon the stage. True it is that I had some fear, but great ambition. It seemed to me a privilege that a queen might be proud of to personify the goddess of love upon the stage, and to exhibit beauty under circumstances so intoxicating, to a theatre crowded with dazzled gazers. At last my *debut* approached — I was to make my first appearance in a little ballet, representing the Paradise of

Mohammed ; in this, all the first dancers were previously to exhibit, and I was to be brought in as the youngest, and most beautiful of the Houris, at the close.

“ Arrayed in a light robe of so fine a texture, that my fair form was only veiled, I slowly descended on the stage in a cloud-borne car, and a pretty little infant Cupid, with silvery wings, waved his bright arrow, as he led me forth. The whole throng of figurantes parted, and grouped aside, and paused in their mazy dance. The slow movement of magic lightness, to which I was to come forward, before I gave my *pas seul*, was just rising above the dying applause of a crowded audience, when, amid the groupes of the figurantes, who were all in suspended attitudes of the most studied effect, my eye caught the figure of a lovely little girl, holding up a tamborine above her head, and, with lifted foot, and head thrown back, seeming like her on the remembered stone, to listen for the renewal of a broken strain ; my heart filled and swelled ; I burst into a flood of tears, and sunk senseless into

the arms of those near, who witnessed my distress. They led me from the stage — embraced me — gave me cordials, encouraged, and again led me on.

“ I trembled as I looked on the multitude ; all heads and glistening eyes ; but the bravos, the loud clappings, the kind words near, at length reassured me. I danced timidly, yet very gracefully, and I looked, I doubt not, beautiful as a stage Venus ever looked. My happy effort was rewarded with thunders of applause.

“ Well, the kind, but ill-judging lady who had taken me from my little vine-clad home, where I was happy, innocent, and heedless, and danced only to please myself and the blue sky, lived only for a few short months, to see me, as she had predicted, the charm of the theatre. Her death was sudden, and left me without a guide or a protectress. One of the oldest and best singers at the opera, a married man, proposed that I should board with him and his wife, an elderly woman, who had been designedly marked in all her attentions to me.

I agreed to this; I was a very weak character; they soon got an entire control over me, as much as if I had been their daughter, or rather slave. My salary was large; I wished to be generous to my parents, but it was little that they suffered me so to dispose of. I was admired and vain. With such jealousy did they watch me, that, although wherever I went many bright eyes made love to me, no one could get the opportunity of speaking to me, except in their presence. The male dancers, the loungers behind the scenes, the idle young nobles, they watched most narrowly. Their argus eyes were ever on me; at every rehearsal, every representation, one or the other stood near with the fixed look of the sleepless lynx. No convent life could be more strict. They made me practise constantly the most difficult steps, the lofty balancings, the never-ending, giddy, (and I must say graceless) pirouettes; this, day after day, for hours, so that I began to sicken at my fate, and long for any change. But for the nightly incense of applause, and the vain pleasure of looking in a mirror, I should have been in absolute despair. I wanted

a lover too : sometimes I thought of the brown, manly Giuseppe ; but he was a peasant, with the rude rough hand of labour, and the coarse garb of poverty. I thought of him ; but always with regret, that I could not change him, in dress, manner, whiten his hand, comb out his thick black hair, and give him perfumes. They had turned my head with the jargon mixture of their painter and sculptor phrases : an Adonis — a Paris — such a lover I wanted. Well, they gave me a lover at last, costly in dress, in manner polished, with a delicate hand, and well-dressed hair, and perfumed too ; but — eighty years of age : they sold me to a gray old man. They made me dance too each night, and smile upon the world, then home to a loathed couch, where I wept, unheeded wept, and they watched me still. They took me with them from city to city. Many a time did I curse my hard fate, yet return to our cottage was impossible. Enough had been given to my parents to stimulate their cupidity ; yet so little, that they had readily credited the invented tales of my extravagance, pride, and disregard for them. In Florence, in Milan,

in every city to which we resorted, some aged or odious suitor for my favors was found, and I was tyrannized into the smile of submission.

It was here in Venice that I first found a deliverer, and a protector, in the person of an English nobleman; he was young, and wealthy; on his travels. Although my interested companions had already devoted me to a rich hoary patrician, yet, under a notion that they might, in some way, dupe the Englishman also, they admitted his visits. There was a kind of manliness about his admiration, so different from any thing I had met with before, that, although he was neither handsome or soft-voiced, I liked, and determined to confide in him, and ask his protection. I told him my exact situation, the control exercised over my person and salary, in the very first interview I ever had with him alone. I offered myself to fly into his arms, and live in his service. With indignant warmth he listened to my tale, and cheerfully promised to deliver me. He did so in a ready, resolute manner. One night, after the opera, when my gray admirer was handing me to my gondola, and my jealous

guardians in company, I was suddenly lifted off my feet by the strong, but tender pressing arm of a stout man in a mask, and carried with silent speed down a narrow lane, at the bottom of which lay a gondola. It was a dark night; there was no lamp; but I saw four gondolieri, and knew it was a bark of the larger class, and designed for flight; so rapid was our course, that we were already seated in a carriage at Fusina, ere I thought myself clear of the city.

“My deliverer carried me to England, and placed me in commodious lodgings, in London.

“In no place, in no country, is the condition of a female, who has yielded, lost, or been robbed of her honour, other than unhappy; but, in England, the true paradise of girls, free, chaste, and fearless; of wives loved, leaned upon, and honoured by noble manly husbands, the lot of the mistress is doubly wretched. Ah! miserable lot; there I lived, a beautiful recluse; a shunned thing; seen only of men; or, when I drove out in the carriage kept for me; gazed at by ladies, in the parks, with a kind of interest, or a scornful sneer, or a hal-

lowed commiseration, just as their various characters might prompt them. Ah! how sadly I suffered when I looked on mothers, daughters, and young female friends in blooming groupes, full of modest attractions. Then it was that I used to feel a lone, a leprous thing. My protector was kind, manly, delicate, loving in his way, and very generous; gave me baubles, and gay dresses, and delicacies for my table: occasionally he would bring two or three intimate friends to dine with us; once, two ladies situated like myself accompanied them, but they were coarse in their manners, and, secluded as I lived, I was yet glad that they never came again.

“How very sad my life was: I used to look out opposite, and watch the poor maids who scoured the door-steps, and chattered, laughed, and nodded to each other, with a yearning of love, and envy of their cheerful, though hard-working lives.—Many of them too were very beautiful in face, and form; and, but for the red hand, and awkward walking would have had far more suitors than thousands above them. I

was wonderfully struck with their fine pride ; the frank and honest smile for the plain sweet-heart (as they called it) of their own humble class, and their rough rejection of the seducing simpers of well-dressed loungers.

“I learned accidentally, and, with a feeling of great pain, that it was difficult for a person in my situation either to hire, or contrive, in any way, to keep a female servant of character : nor can I wonder. A pretty-looking, modest little thing, lived with me as waiting maid. I liked, I petted, I spoiled her ; taught her to know her charms, and to be vain of dress, to think of admirers, and she was — ruined. More of her, poor girl, presently.

“One evening my lord came, and brought two friends to a late dinner. It was in the spring ; pleasant weather, and we sat with the windows open. Two foreign ballad-singers, attracted by the noise and the lights, came, and sung to us. I was strangely agitated, while they were singing, but as the air was new to me, and the two voices blendingly mellowed into each other, I knew not why ; only, all the time, I could not

but think of our cottage, and the stone seat, and the trelliced vine, and all my little childish pleasures. At last one of the gentlemen went to the window, and questioned them. "I am from Genoa, Senhor," said one, in reply, "and this, my poor companion from Naples, quite a young man, but blind, Senhor; we were both taken by a Sallee rover, and the barbarous captain put out the eyes of this brave youth, because he had killed one of his favourites in the combat; we were soon after retaken, and set free by a ship of your nation, and have been landed here, and are waiting to get a passage to our own country; but we are destitute, and sing for a morsel of bread, and your good charity."

"Here is a crown for you, poor devils," said the gentleman carelessly, and then asked, 'what is your name, my poor blind boy?' 'Giuseppe, Senhor, of Pozzuoli.'

"I can just recollect the quick filling and breaking, as it were, of my heart. — It never healed again. — For many weeks my existence was a blank, and, when I recovered, I found that I had miscarried during my long illness, and was

reduced to the shadow of my former self; that my fit had been attributed solely to my state of pregnancy; that my protector had continued to call, and send regularly, but that he was very soon to be married to a lady of rank and fortune. This he, after a few visits, confirmed, breaking it with great delicacy, and offering me continued and generous assistance, but intimating that we could meet no more; and, recommending my return to Italy. An engagement, however, at the English Opera was proposed to me, and when sufficiently recovered, I accepted it. My strength and my beauty returned—in part returned; but thicker was the false colouring now required for my faded cheek, and deeper the black line to give lustre to those eyes, which care and sorrow had already dimmed.

“Yet I came upon the boards of your opera, before your noble, splendid, and kind audience,” (*your*, for she guessed me to be an Englishman, though I shook my head in denial; to my heart it went), “came with the practised smile, and the waving arm, and the light, sylph-like step, and the languishing bowing down of my

neck. Though my heart was broken, yet I tried to conceal it from myself; and, as I saw numbers bewitched and fascinated by my charms, I felt vain, listened to the whispers of admiration, and again admitted a protector, young, wealthy, and, as I thought, sincerely ardent; but he proved a mere slave of fashion, cold as the chain he wore. The gaming table, and the race ground, the club, the dinner, the rout, the ball; he lived but for these things. I was a mere appendage; at first prized as a novelty, after retained from pride. He made me visit the theatres; drive in the parks; be seen in the gardens; and all this to gratify his paltry vanity; that I might be pointed at as his possession; but, in our private intercourse, he was capricious, cold, indifferent, and even bitter. I was a fading rose, and he rudely shook off and trampled on the withering leaves. It were little to be wondered at, that such a man should forsake me in misfortune.

“It chanced one day that, as I was stepping into my chariot, to take my cheerless drive, the horses started, I lost my footing, fell, and vio-

lently sprained my ankle. For that season I could dance no more; and, in a few weeks, my protector, as he had styled himself, deserted me, leaving me pregnant, and without any other provision than my own trifling personals afforded me. My trinkets, my clothes, soon wasted away; however, I took a small lodging at a foreign dress-maker's, and through her kind economy, I was enabled to struggle through a season of difficulty, and gave birth to a beautiful boy. I wrote to inform my late protector, but received no answer. I was reduced to great distress, and hardly knew what to do. I could again use my limb, but my ankle was no longer strong enough for the dance. The manager, however, partly out of compassion, and partly because I had a style of face and figure very effective in stage groupings, engaged me for mere parts of action, where I was only to be seen as a Juno, or a queen, or a female genius, in a car, or on a throne, or in the clouds; and to frown beautifully, or most radiantly to smile, as the character required.

“I would suckle my little baby just before I

left my poor lodging, and would think of it all the while I was away: and, the very moment that the performance was over, I would put down my gilt paper crown, and wash off the hot rouge, and press my poor head, that ached from the smell of lamps, or from the long constraint of my position, sitting perhaps on a narrow plank, in a car of paste-board, among canvas clouds, and hurry back to the cradle of my fatherless little one.

“A great anxiety for the health of this innocent caused me again to write to its father. I stated the expences of my confinement, the debt to my landlady, the illness of my child—of his child; the aid, and comforts, which, from the smallness of my salary as a figurante, I had no means to procure for it.

“I got a cruel reply; denying his child, and vilifying me. It contained a bank-note of small amount, telling me to physic my brat, and myself for once, but to tease him no more, and never presume to name him as its father.

“I can never tell what I suffered that evening. I was just dressed for the character of Cleopa-

tra, when I received this bitter blow. With a burning and a broken heart I was borne in upon the stage in a lofty car, drawn by winged genii, cherub-cupids smiling at my feet; and clustering behind me; mechanically I looked the beauty; the light, the loving, the wanton Cleopatra. The applause was rapturous; but oh! never was there a wilder storm of woe in any bosom than in mine, at that moment, when I sat, and bowed with open smilings; looked on my Antony with lustre-lighted eyes; and clasped him in the true stage embrace; long, close, and renewed with seeming transport. All this I did, yet was I revolving death — death to escape intolerable suffering, cruel degradation — death to revenge myself on an unfeeling wretch; — vain thought, as if a being so abject could feel a worthy pang, or were not already far below remorse. . Wrapped in my coarse shawl, I trod back that evening my wet, cold way to my fireless lodgings; but in passing a druggist's shop, I bought a strong dose of laudanum, and, ere I rapped at my door, swallowed it. No sooner did I enter,

than I took up my dear baby, and gave my breast to its asking cry, and hugged the soothed suckler, and its young eyes smiled, and its tiny hands pressed my yielding bosom: when lo! a horrid thought rushed across my brain. 'It is poison — poison — not the life-milk of God's providing; — I have poisoned the sweet source.' I raved for my landlady; gave my child into her arms; bade her save it; get a doctor, and a nurse with kinder nipple; told her that mine was cursed; that the flow of life from mine was mingled with the black draught of death. In wild haste I spoke, and fled away; but I was pursued with humane activity, brought back, made to throw off the poison, and lay, for days, exhausted on my couch. I lost all flesh; my eyes became hollow; my cheeks very wan, and, to crown my misery, my kind landlady became a bankrupt; was forced to leave her house, and go, and take service as a journeywoman in an Italian flower-shop. She gave me as much as she could spare from her necessities, and I took a small room in a noisome alley. I could get no employ, no

work ; — for I knew no trade ; moreover, I was weak, lame, and had a child in my arms. I soon became a beggar ; I, and my little infant, wrapped in rags. We stood in the street by day, and we slept by night where the *ever ready charity* of those, almost as poor, would suffer us. One day, as I was seated, shivering on a door step, a very well-dressed pretty woman passed by, and gave me half a crown, saying, ‘ There, poor thing, there’s for you. God knows, it may be my turn some day.’ I had not immediately recognized her features ; she was so improved by time, and so altered by dress ; but her voice I instantly recollected. It was Susan, my pretty little maid, whom I had so caressed, and spoiled, — Susan, changed into a bold-eyed, but a beautiful courtesan ; yet there was a restlessness in that eye, and a changeful hue upon that cheek, which spoke the painful consciousness that innocence was lost. A dagger could not have struck deeper in my heart than that sad sight. My emotion astonished her ; but, when I called her ‘ Susan,’ and, after a doubting gaze, she knew me, she

raised me up, and could not speak for surprise, and tears. She called a coach, put me into it, and immediately conveyed me to her lodgings. Here she supported me for a whole winter. Every where the condition of a prostitute is wretched; but in England their circumstances and feelings are widely, and sorrowfully different from those in other lands.

“In Italy, the humbled girl is bred, and sold to her degrading profession. She follows it, therefore, without any bitter feelings of remorse; acquitted in her own mind of having been the seeking consentor to her sin, she lives through her bitter course as easily and cheerfully as she may; but, in England, although numbers are bred from the very cradle, among the profligate, and schooled for the brothel, yet are there thousands, thousands, who have been seduced from virtuous homes, and indulgent parents, from the manly master, and the kind mistress, and the light service, and the cheerful kitchen; and, in England, they fall to rise no more.

“I was at first awfully disgusted by all I heard.

They drank — the women in these brothels ; the hiccup and the oath mingled alike with their caresses and their quarrels. They would sing, and cry convulsively, over the bowl. They would alternately fondle, scoff at, scorn, or assault their visitors. How wild, and unfeminine they seemed ! I thought them monsters, demons in human form ; but I soon discovered that it was not so. With stronger minds, and more warmly domestic affections, than the women of most other countries, they feel their out-cast fate more bitterly. They look backward to their state of innocence, with a kind of despairing regret : they look up, and around, at all the virtuous of their own sex, with a weeping envy : they will think and talk of their old, and honest, and humble lovers ; some far away, perhaps on the seas, gathering gold, prized only for their sakes, in the battle, the tempest, and the sickly climate ; or others at home, now forgetting them, and settled in humble callings, with modest, industrious wives, and rising families. They think of these things, till a kind of madness possesses them, and so they revel and rave until they pine and die.

“ For six months I occupied an apartment, just within the chamber of poor Susan ; for, in a few days after she took me in, I was seized with an affection of the hip-joint, which confined me for twenty weeks to my room. There were other females in that house and the adjoining, and I often saw, and always heard the rioting.

“ If ever a warm heart beat in the bosom of a human being, it was in the breast of Susan. She nursed, and served me, as though I were still her mistress, — me, who had paved the way for her ruin. Knowing, as I did, all that she suffered ; a witness of her wretched mode of existence ; conscious that I was, in part, the cause of her fall, and yet eating daily the bread, which she provided from the wages of her reluctant sacrifice, — bread gotten with the cold sigh of sorrow, or the burning blush of indignation, yet, given to me with the kind smile of bounty ; knowing, and feeling all this, I was a constant, helpless prey to agony and remorse. At length poor Susan, I weep with joy as I think of it, Susan was snatched from this wretched course of life, by the mercy of Heaven. She had

been born and bred in a country village, and chiefly brought up under the care of a kind old grandmother, for whose memory, and for every thing she had been wont to do and say, Susan had always entertained an affectionate reverence, and, though vanity and passion had broken down those precepts, which might have saved her, still, *even here*, in her lost state, she always spoke of that lamented relative with a filial love.

“There was her pincushion, a pair of scissors, a thimble, still carefully preserved, and there was a small old black book with clasps, still kept, and often touched, and taken up, and put down again, un-opened, with a heavy sigh.

“I remember one night she returned to her lodging, bringing with her a young man of mild and gentlemanlike appearance, who had the hesitating look of one strongly fascinated, yet half ashamed. It seems that his eye caught the book, for I heard him say, ‘What does this book here? do you ever affect to read this?’ ‘Sometimes,’ replied Susan, ‘when I dare, but I have not been good enough lately,

or for a long time past.' She spoke in a sad, sincere tone, with an agitated, flushed cheek, and a tearful eye. He put two guineas on the table, assured her, with tenderness, that with such a frame of mind she might safely open it, that it was the book of mercy; and he hurried instantly away.

"It is a remarkable fact that this was the last visit she ever received as a prostitute.

"The very next day there came a plain humble man, a journeyman in some trade, who had courted her when at service, and who, knowing all the better qualities of her heart and temper, had long deplored her fall. He came with a strange proposal, frankly and earnestly made, that she would give up her way of life, and marry him. It was a pity, he said, that such a young woman should be so lost; that he'd take her, for better, for worse, till death. On his account, in justice to him, her hesitation was long; but he was steadily urgent in his offer, and she gratefully accepted it. I saw them married, and I thank God for that mercy. They still protected me, and removed me with

them; but, very shortly after, learning that a ship was advertised as about to sail on a return voyage to Venice, the thought struck me that I might perhaps get a passage to my native country. If beggary was to be my lot, it would be more tolerable in my native climate; and I was determined, helpless as I was, without skill for any trade, and with a crippled limb, which forbade all rude labour, no longer to burthen her, who had so generously supported me. My application was successful. There lies the kind mariner, who brought me from England hither, four years ago; who long helped to support me himself, and who procured for me the charity of others. But his own power, and all his influence with others, have, with his little substance, now passed away. Shipwreck and losses, disease and helplessness, have brought him, not only to want, but utter destitution. It was for him, and for his wife in the pangs of labour, and for his famishing children, that I begged with such wild importunity; little it is I require for myself, nothing for any one of mine — my own little one is dead — my

father is dead — my mother is dead. Strangers have got our cottage, and our vineyard ; my brothers and sisters are all scattered, I know not where ; and I know not where my poor Giuseppe is now wandering, and singing for his daily bread. Till the ruin of this my humble patron, I was wretched indeed, but yet resignedly so. I well knew that with haggard and emaciated features, and a palsied limb, and the ragged veil of poverty, it were vain to hope for the exciting of any sympathy amid the common crowd of the wealthy and self-indulgent. Beauty in weeds and tears, loveliness in poverty and pain, will seldom want assistance ; although oftentimes they are succoured by those who look to the harvest of a base, and a compelled reward. Forgive me this unworthy spleen, Senhor ; I speak from the experience of a bitter life, and I joy to have been at once relieved, and reproved for my uncharitable feeling, by your noble bounty. My tale is told. I shall bask in the sun in winter, or lie down in the shade in summer, in common with other beggars, for a few years longer, fed by the

convent dole, and at last, like them, I shall find that cold, but calm bed, which none can withhold from me."

"Not so," I exclaimed; "at least a roof shall always shelter you, and want you shall never know. Your tale is strange, and sad; but surely, your case has been a most remarkable exception to that of others in your gay profession; surely, in general, those whom we listen to, and gaze on, with such delight and joy, in crowded theatres, surely they must themselves largely share the happiness, or pleasure rather, which they shed around them. They cannot often feign, or often suffer. They laugh, and they are gay, — have no cares, no troubles."

"Ah! no, Senhor, believe me, it is not so; some of the young are, for a while, cheerful and thoughtless from the novelty of their life; others, in the heyday of their blood, are from temperament, from passion, joyous. Here and there, though very seldom, an old comic performer may be found—a laugher, a philosopher in his way: but the many are miserable, very miserable; their necessity, and their pride, keep

them all their lives in harness ; and, they feed from habit on the bravo, the viva, and the applauding clap. Go, Senhor, go take your stand, to-night, at the side door of the theatre, and mark the faces which pass in — worn by melancholy, wasted by dissipation, and wan from actual distress ; then take your seat in front, and regard the painted pageant ; the galley slave in chains, tugging at his heavy oar, works not with a more abhorrent, sickening heart, than the many there. Oftentimes, in my early service on the boards, have I laughed at the grim, unclean, sallow faces of those poor men, who, by the aid of a little rouge, were to be transformed into gods or shepherds, priests or bacchanals, and were to dance with goddesses, graces, and nymphs, who well corresponded in charms, before tinsel and paint had done their work, and the stage-lamps shed over them that light and colouring which make the pulse of the young and unaccustomed gazer to beat so quick and so delightfully. Believe me, nothing is so painfully exhausting as the effort of those who are continually called on, night

after night, to utter, laugh, and look some favourite buffoon-like character; and, when it happens, that any one of these suffers a domestic calamity, it is heart rending to listen to, and look at them. I remember well our Buffo at Naples, an animated, kind, delightful little man, had a young wife he really loved, who died in child-birth just at the commencement of the carnival. He was distracted, lost his rest, his appetite, his health; could not endure society: yet he was the father of four helpless children, and necessitous; thus, therefore, he was compelled to sing, and wink, and nod his head, and snap his fingers, and caper about the stage. Young and thoughtless as I was, at the time, my heart bled for him. One night, in particular, after drawing forth thunders of applause, he came off, put his hands to his face, convulsive sobbings shook his whole frame, he left the house abruptly, and in the morning they found him laid upon his wife's grave, laughing, and he laughed as they led him away — and laughed when they showed him his pretty children — and laughed afterwards till he died.

But he never spoke again to any one; — a harmless idiot he wandered on the sunny shore, and the charitable fed him, and the children followed him, and he laughed at them, and at every sight, and every sound — the same sad silly laugh — but he is dead, poor man. No Senhor, believe me that true tales, true confessions, of a few lives passed behind the scenes of a theatre would be very salutary lessons for those who sit dazzled and enchanted before them.”

The doctor now arrived to visit his patients, and reported to us that the poor man could certainly not recover, and that in a very few days he would be no more. Gianetta again took her place at his bedside, and I returned home.

I was happy to have heard the sad tale of this unfortunate, it diverted the current of my reflections from dwelling on my own sorrows : but yet, the more I mused upon it, the more intolerable became the idea of residing any longer in Venice ; for Venice was all a theatre, — mask-

ing and mummery — song and wantonness — a perpetual round of these pleasures — joined in by all but those behind the curtain, those in the dungeon, and upon the dying bed, and in the dark recesses of the naked and the destitute.

For the vein swelling with health, and the purse heavy with gold, all was sunshine and holiday. I was young and wealthy; but sunshine and holiday were not for me. An outcast myself, I had strange and melancholy joy in hearing of the wretched — in looking for, in loving them. I immediately made the most liberal arrangements for the future support of poor Giannetta, and the sufferers with whom she lived, and then left the city.

It was by night — not a fine clear night — the moon rode high, and loomed very large, yet pale and desolate she looked — and the sky was not blue, and small black clouds were hurrying across it fitfully.

Slowly we passed up the still Brenta. I sat without, cloaked and motionless. Here and there, upon its shadowy banks, white villas stood

silent, and ghost-like among black trees; — suddenly, at a turn, we came upon a lone chapel with lights, and sounds within.

I could see, through the opened door, the heads and vestments of priests, and the tall torches in their hands. I sprung to land, and walked towards it. As I entered the aisle I heard the ringing of tools upon the hollow pavement — the heavy crow, and the lighter spade. The grave-diggers were moving away from the scene, but they paused, and turned, and bowed the head, and crossed themselves just as the requiem began; — sadly and solemnly the bald priests chanted it; and they stood around a broad black stone, which had just again been fitted into its disturbed bed.

“For whom,” I asked, “do you sing the service of the dead?” as the strain ceased.

“Senhor, we do not know; a noble stranger who has passed two years in deep seclusion in yonder villa.”

“Of what country?”

“Oh! Italian, Senhor, but from the south; we have heard that she was a Neapolitan.”

“I thought you said a *Nobleman*.”

“No; a noble stranger: we only knew her as the Lady Agatha. St. Anthony defend and preserve us! are you ill, Senhor?”

“No; — here’s gold; — your torch; — leave me; — I would be alone; — I knew the lady; — pray leave me.”

I kept a shuddering vigil by her grave. In the morning I went to the villa, and wandered through the gardens; I spoke to no one; asked no questions; but looked, and looked; and gathered flowers; and picked up withered leaves; and let them fall again; and stopped, and listened to the matin of the birds; and drank from the clear bubbling fountain; and lay on the green turf by its side; and put off my encumbering hat; and bathed my burning brow; and then arose, and went away — far, and rapidly away. I did not stop, even for rest, till my servant told me that I was arrived, and pointed to that city of sorrow, Rome — Rome, where the ruin frowns, and the dark cypress waves. As I ascended the cold wide stair-case, and entered the vast and gloomy apartments of

a large unfrequented *albergo*, I felt that it was a fitting home for a wanderer like myself, with widowed hopes. They brought me food ; I walked to and fro, and sat not down to it. I broke bread, and drank cup after cup of wine, in nervous haste, and thought aloud, and talked comfort to myself, and was glad to feel myself in Rome, and took my lamp, and went to my couch, and put aside the heavy damask curtains, and laid me down, and slept profoundly and long.

“ I am in Rome,” was my first thought when I awoke, — “ My Agatha — my phantom of delight has fled me, is gone down with her beauty to the grave ; how perishable are these bright things with breath ! The morrow’s accident kills the young bud born only of the hope of yesterday. I have done with life ; I’ll live among the dead ; I am alone, where a widowed city sits solitary ; I’ll wander in her silent places the worshipper of ruin ; I am in Rome :” — and I threw wide the casement, and looked forth. — It was a street, an everyday street ; priests in groups were taking snuff

together ; sickly, but crafty-looking shopkeepers stood at the doors of their traveller toy-shops ; designing, needy idlers lounged about the inn-gates ; and a coarse-looking brown populace of sturdy men and large-featured black-eyed women paced noisily along the way, on all the sausage and garlic business of common market life. And this was Rome. I shut to the window, vexed to the soul. What had I expected ? — Whatever it was, I felt at the moment, as if I had been fooled and mocked.

There came a knock at the door of my apartment. A man with a lean visage and protruding eye-balls thrust in his head and followed it ; a book was under his arm, and a long roll of engravings in his hand.

“ The Senhor is a stranger, a traveller ; one world, one Rome, Senhor. — I shall be happy to attend you every where, and at all times ; I have the honour to be a *cicerone* ; the antiquities, the churches, the galleries, I shall conduct you to them all ; you cannot dispense with my services ; it is fortunate for you I am

disengaged ; all foreigners of taste, all enlightened travellers, ask for me.”

My servant came in, and saved me from this man. At the sun-set hour, for I still sat a thoughtful prisoner within, my host came to tell me that it was the time when all the nobility and wealth of Rome paraded the Corso in their carriages ; would I go forth ? Yes ; but not *there* ; surely there is another Rome ; thither will I go, and let me be silently conducted, and left there. And there is another Rome !—We drove to the Forum. There was no soft light about ; no tinging ray of a red, or a yellow sunset ; all was that gloomy grey, which we might look for in the Valley of the Shadow of Death ; and the objects awful — two or three columns, together clinging, under heavy, dark fragments of frieze and cornice ; arches of triumph too ; — dim arches, with none beneath, or near them ; the earth heapy, and barren brown, — a few black trees, — and one ruin of a massive and towering majesty, (where an assembled people once shouted in her games,) yawning and silent ;—Rome, all-living eye, and

ear, upon its every seat and step ;—Rome coming forth from the proud spectacle, and, with bare head, and ample toga, covering the space around, and spreading through the marble city — they are pale ghosts.

Rome rushing with eager gaze to the capitol ! *Reges captivi ! Imperator triumphans !* Pale ghosts all of them ! The *Corona triumphalis !* A shadowy thing ! S. P. Q. R. ! *Letters !* — The very language of their senate, that fell from every Roman lip and sounded familiar in every Roman ear, dead ; pored on by the student beneath the midnight lamp, — and breathed, reverentially, with a rich though doubtful utterance.

There was a something deeply soothing to my wounded heart, as I trod, or sat, or stood mute among these ruins. If, methought, I cannot live to enjoy the present, or look with hope to the future, the past is open to me ; back, through the long night of ages, I may tread unquestioned ; and may wake, and talk with the mighty dead ; listen to their trumpets, — march

with them to battle, — ride revel with them in victory ; — stand, silent and listening, in their solemn senate, or lie down under the spreading beech, and smile, weep, or kindle as the poet bids me.

The night was far spent when I retraced my solitary path. Slowly I walked, and happily, for I thought not about my wretched self. As I approached the bottom of a long dark street, I heard that sound of rushing waters, which in the silence of darkness strikes always upon the listening ear with such deep solemnity. Passing onwards I entered a small square, and started as I looked around me.

The sea god of the heathen stood before me, like a menacing apparition, upon his ocean car ; and the wild sea horses were fiercely pawing high, amid fragments of rock, and tumbling waters ; and tritons stood restrainingly near their arching necks ; and in niches above, there were draperied forms looking stilly ; — and all this was in the night, and these things were pale marble. Oh ! it is a city for all wanderers, who seek forgetfulness of self, the forms of

other days. Go forth at hours when others sit at home,—go forth, and live in their silent company. It is companionship to stand, and think before a noble statue. Its presence has a power over the rising thought. Mean things and meditated sins fly from the dark recesses of the heart, away, far away, and leave us purified and at peace, for those innocent and happy moments which we lose unconsciously in thoughtful gazing. I wonder not that so many men have lived, and died in this silent idol worship. There seems a protecting majesty upon marble brows, — a high and unearthly calm about them. You would expect to hear no sound in those long galleries, so palely peopled, but aerial harpings, such as the moaning wind will sometimes wake upon those magic lyres men make to woo it.

Men have loved pictures too — why not? Love, happily love a picture. It cannot frown upon you — cannot fly you — cannot smile, then die. Yes — it were long to tell the sweet joys which fell, like kind dews, upon my fevered brain, and thence distilled a precious balsam,

which dropped all healing on my aching heart. I say not, now as I look back, that it was peace; repose it was — a mercy given, one draught of innocent, permitted pleasure to the thirsting lip of guilt chastised. My life here was one of reading, rambling, dreaming; my health, my spirits improved; I did not live by any rule; my division of the night, and the day season, the hours of my rest, the hours of my repose, were all guided by the present feeling. My lone rides among the ruined tombs and aqueducts; my night walks in the Forum; my solitary visits to the galleries of Rome, even now, in the still happiness of my hermit life, I look back upon them with fearless delight. I have always loved solitude, for I have always had care to hide and woe to cherish; but, in Rome, even care and woe may be harboured and treasured in the heart, the scene is in such sad accordance. Daily I visited St. Peter's, and my spirit mourned in it. It was not prayer, it was not penitence, — it was not fear, — it was not love, — but the silent resigned mourning of a sick heart.

It was not when the bright sun shone down into that glorious temple that I could endure its gorgeous splendour. It was not when the high altar was arrayed, and when the high mass was chaunted by the sovereign pontiff; and when the mitred, and stoled conclave, and steel corslets, and glittering guards, and an assembled city knelt down upon its marble pavement; it was not then I ever loved it: but, at evening's most melancholy hour. Then the dim majesty was awful, wondrous; it was a space to the mind's eye infinite: for, in the aisle's long depth, you saw but shadow, and in the midst a circlet of living light; little white innocuous flames; a faint-fed fire, whose feeble rays died off, on all sides, into gloom. Winged angels flew, in dark draperies, about some lateral shrine, and giant forms leaned white against the huge pilasters; and your heart beat, and you paused, and dared not tread — too ravished to recede, too fearful to go onwards — for it seemed like a gate that led from life — the still, chill portal of another world.

One evening, as I stood in the midst of that

temple solitude, I heard a very low, light murmuring, and whispered breathings, and deep sighs burst big from some manly bosom, and I heard grave, kind tones at every pause. I knew it was a confessional, from whence those hallowed sounds came; it was the outpouring of some wounded heart, and the consoling voice of the absolving priest.

I was deeply impressed, and affected; for many days I thought of nothing else. I forgot the prison nunneries, the monkish slaves, the torture chamber, and the fagot of the inquisition; I thought but on the blessed aid and help, which, it seemed to me, their faith and discipline extended to the confessing sinner. True it was, that my reason told me that man's absolving must be a form, a mere form, and could not serve; but I had a secret heavy, and hateful. I should at least be heard — perchance find comfort; the relief at least of disburthening my sorrows — the sound, the tone of consolation.

Deciding thus, I wrapped me one midnight in my cloak, and stole forth with my tale all ready

for confession. I had so planned it, that I felt secure in the concealment of my being a Protestant; but the main facts of my flight from my country, and my family, — of Agatha, — of the wealth acquired — concealing whence it came, — and of my present isolated state, I confessed freely. The priest heard me silently to the close.

“And can your own church give no comfort or counsel,” said the invisible. “Me you have not deceived; but you are awfully deceiving yourself. Go home to your anxious father, and your weeping mother; meet openly your merited shame — your best, your only penance; go with uncovered face, and bitter tears, to your forsaken home; — the wild agony of your misplaced, unhallowed, but yet ungovernable love, has brought with it its own punishment; as it is, therefore, although you are hardly saved from my contempt, yet I will not visit you with the anger of our church; — I will not betray you; — break off your sins by showing mercy to the poor, and striving to benefit your fellow-

creatures; — above all things, linger not in Rome.”

Restless, dissatisfied with myself, and with all the world, I returned to my apartments; — no word of soothing — no romantic event — no act of penance ordered — no shirt of hair — no perilous pilgrimage — detected, and though pitied, despised; — and yet he had given me counsel, alike wise and kind. But to return home, and to say I have sinned, and be embraced, and pardoned, — it sounds lovely; but my heart's pride reared loftily its scorpion crest at the bare thought. Solitary as the prodigal; like him ashamed, like him sorry, but like him content to keep away, even though husks were my portion. My husks too were golden, — such as my hungry mind, and empty, aching heart could feed on. But yet I envied, when I thought of them, the very servants, whose affection was daily acknowledged by my father's smile; and I, poor I, with none to look kindly on me, but pictured things; the good angel, and the mourning Magdalen, and the weeping Peter.

One result, however, of my confession was a sudden resolve to leave Rome, and I took the road to Naples.

It was a night of heavy rain, black, and comfortless when I reached Terracina. The inn was all gloom; no light was brought to the door; we called — none heeded, — we entered the house — steps and voices sounded tumultuously above. My servant and myself groped up the staircase, and made our way, guided by the noise, to a large cheerless room. One brass lamp stood on the long table. The host, the landlady, the cook, some vile sbirri, some postillions, some maids, and two or three peasants were all crowded around an elderly gentleman and lady, whom, in a moment, I perceived to be English.

We have all heard of the woe of mothers bereaved by the slayers of their sucking babes, and we think it cannot be surpassed; perhaps not; but how shall this agonized father be painted in words? He was a helpless invalid,

seated in a chair, from which he could not rise; but his imploring cry — his grey locks disordered — his phrenzied eye — the tearing open of his vest, and the nervous grasping of his bosom — the upheld purse, and the loud reward of all his fortune; and the maddening exclaim, Maria, Maria — my daughter, — my daughter! his wife embracing him with convulsive tears, and silent; and all the lookers on talking, or smiling with composure; the lean and sallow sbirri, hard, indifferent, and cunning; the fat host speaking awkward comfort; the postilions laughing; the peasants scowling; and the women alone with any redeeming compassion in their eyes. I soon gathered the cause of his affliction: his daughter had been seized since his arrival at the inn, and borne off to the mountains by banditti. It was in vain they told him that, on the morrow, she would certainly be restored to him safe, on the payment of the ransom they might demand. “*Now, now*: he would pay anything, if the sbirri would follow, and bring her back

now." The idea of his daughter among brigands, even for a moment, was anguish, torment.

Eagerly I too offered rewards, and urged them to their duty—a guide to lead me, or merely to point the path, I would go instantly, and alone—would carry the ransom, and bring back his daughter. They smiled at me cold and contemptuously—said it was late—I was a stranger, or I should not talk of going among the brigands—alone too. They laughed—and I cursed them, and went out armed; but the rain fell heavy, and dark, and bewilderingly. I could not see a yard before me—I shouted; but I heard no sound save the wild wind, and the loud surf-roar. I came in again, and went to the father, where he sat by untasted food, in silent, alarmed agony, and took his hand in mine, and promised all my best services, at early dawn, on the morrow, and bade him hope, and cheer up; and he looked at me thankful through his tears, while the mother mourned aloud. All had left the apartment but one little dark-eyed, brown maid; and she made a sign to me to go forth with her,—and when we were alone in the

corridor, she asked me—"Have you courage?"
"For anything that can serve or save this lady."
"Then go to your sleeping chamber, and persuade the old people to go to bed; and, at one o'clock, when the moon rises, arm; and when you hear a pebble strike your casement, drop yourself from the window; it is a long fall, but the ground is soft. I have known older than you to leap it down safe."

It was with difficulty I could prevail on the father and mother to retire to their chamber, and on no account could they be persuaded to do more than lie down, dressed as they were, on mattresses.

It was near midnight when I got to my room, and I lay looking at the window, that I might catch the very first glimmer of the rising moon. The rain fell less heavily, and at length ceased altogether; and the moon rose red, and crescented. I felt down and fixed my pistols firmer in my broad loin-girth, and drew tighter the strap of my sword-belt; and I thought a prayer; and then I felt honored and animated by the enterprise. A black cloud had long

hung over me; this was like the bright breaking ^{or} through of the blue sky; — father and daughter — they would thank and bless me — I might perchance anchor my poor heart in that quiet family; or, at all events, I should save a girl, release a captive, and give joy to the hearts of aged parents — or — I should die.

No, no; — not die on an errand of mercy — no, not die — or, if I did, 'twere well so to find my grave."

The pebble struck light and short upon the window; in a moment I was by the side of my conductress: from the peaked hood of a thick brown fisher's jacket looked out her resolute eyes, and her white teeth shone smilingly out, when she saw how lightly and actively I made the dropping leap from the high window.

"Follow me," said she, "as softly and silently as you can; do exactly as I do. I tell you they will not ransom this girl. It is black Sebastian who carried her off. I know him; but she is safe yet; my cunning and your courage will match them. I know black Sebastian."

I followed her, step by step, up a narrow mountain path. Now the wet earth slipped beneath our tread — now we had to catch at a fragment of rock, now at a shrub, for support. It was an hour's toil — we did not speak.

The peril and the pride of enterprise were alike new and delightful. My mind was busy imaging out the figures of the banditti. I pictured their start of surprise, their fierce assault, the clash of steel, and the sound of shot; and I screwed my courage firmly up, and felt the fine throb of desperate resolve.

“We are very near,” whispered the little maid of the inn; “stay for a minute here, I will go see if they are on the watch.”

She disappeared, and left me alone on the summit of that bold height, which rises above Terracina. I could see the wide moonlit ocean, and the dark and curving shores, and promontories and bays afar off. The rain-drops on every thing around looked soft and pearly, and the air was perfume. How poets would have loved the place, and hour, and the calm peacefulness! — how lovers would have

lingered in the still, enchanting scene ! — My guide returned, and whispered fast and exultingly, “ They sleep, they sleep, the black Sebastian sleeps ; and Spalatro, and Pietro ; and the poor young lady ! — Your pistols, Senhor ; you must not spare them ; ” and she caught my girdle, and led me on eagerly. We came to a black ruined wall, (the Roman built it ;) she led me round, beneath its shelter ; — they lay pillowed on stones. Again she whispered, “ He with the long hair is Sebastian, and the short red man is Spalatro — Ah ! the blessed virgin ! they were both brave — pistol them, Senhor ; — Pietro will fly — tread softly — close, close — make sure.”

I stood above them, a pistol pointed in each hand, and the pale moon looked down upon us with her holy light ; and they were sleeping in it. I had come prepared for blows, and blood, and brave encounter ; but not for this. They were brigands, spoilers, murderers ; but the red hand had now confidingly relaxed its grasp — the violent eyes were closed. How awful was that moment ! — the light pressure

of a finger, and I sent two souls unshrived to the bar of heaven. I could as soon have dared to pierce a white-robed spirit of heaven, as these dark crime-stained men who slept.

“Awake !”

Upon their feet they sprung ; and the drawn sword, and glittering dagger, and pointed carbine, menaced me with death ; but they paused as they saw my armed attitude, and resolute bearing. I heard a woman’s curse upon the wind, as the little maiden of the inn fled from us ; and the lady started from her rest, clasped her uplifted hands, and knelt in terror. I called a parley. “ You slumbered on your watch ; my pistols did almost touch your bared temples : I have not shed your blood.” Here the man called Pietro fired on me ; he fell dead to my answering pistol. The black Sebastian raised his sword upon me, it was met by the guard of mine, and my left hand still held a pistol pointing to the red Spalatro. “ Hear me : I come from the father of this lady : give her up to me, and name your ransom ; it shall be paid. The large dark eye of the brigand chief rolled

wonderingly over me; he shook off the long black hair from his olive cheek, and asked me, "Who are you?" "A man — a stranger." "And you have volunteered this dangerous service? For what?" "Because it was my duty." "Take her — You have spared my life. I had not raised my sword on you, but for the death of the fool Pietro. Twelve homeless years of murder, toil, and peril, for gold! and woman! — For gold! — Remember, I'll have her ransom — to-morrow — pledge me your crossed hand — two thousand ducats."

"It is not fear, or doubt, which moves me to consent: I could win her with this true sword; but I will, and rather for the lady's sake, stand by my first offer of ransoming her." I crossed my hand, and he grasped it. He was a man of mountain beauty; a belted form, with the full clean limbs of active strength. I have seldom seen a finer promise of strong, enduring life. — A sound — a shot — and he sprung up with a lofty convulsive leap, and fell flat, and never stirred again, and heard not the reproachful ravings of the little dark-eyed damsel, as

she came and stood over him; and asked for her young Antonio — her murdered Antonio — and spoke of her sad wedding ; and cursed him for tearing her from her bridal chamber — from her Antonio — and taking her to his rocky den, and his accursed couch — and the bed of leaves — of withered leaves — where he blighted her maiden pride.”

The red fierce Spalatro stood, for a while, motionless, astonished as the startled bull, when he doubts whether to fly from, or rush upon his object ; — then turning suddenly, with a swift speed, he rushed down the lonely and dark side of the mountain.

In silver light lay the two blood-stained bodies, and the lady had risen, and caught my arm ; and the maid still stood above the corpse of Sebastian, and her satisfied revenge exulted over the dead. At first it was in vain I asked her to lead us down ; she railed at me for a weak and craven-hearted man ; then loudly laughed, and triumphed at the thought that her own hand had avenged her : at length she did so by a more public path, and at every

little shrine, and every wooden cross, she stopped, and knelt down on the bare stones, and counted her beads; and the lady and myself followed her in a silence, broken only by some warm words of gratitude on her part, or by enquiries about her father.

It was early day-light, when we entered the village. The young maid flew to the opening chapel to confess; and I led back the youthful lady to the inn. The yawning sbirri who stood indolently leaning, in the cloaks in which they had slept, at the portal, started as they saw us coming, and as they caught my angry and contemptuous frown, they ventured not to stop, or question us. I opened the door of the parents' chamber, and the daughter ran in, in tears, and, as I closed it after her, I heard the embracing sob, and the broken utterances of grateful happiness.

Of course I visited in this family at Naples, and of course I was kindly and cordially received.

The gratitude of the fond father seemed to have no limits. I never entered the room that

his countenance did not brighten: he was always ready to converse; but, even when silent, his eye rested on me with a most benignant, parental expression. It was long—weeks, nay months—before Maria Cecil had sufficiently recovered from the effect of the shock, which her nature had received, to be quietly and naturally companionable. I learned from her father, with more delight than wonder, that the very brigands had been awed into respect for his child, by the majesty of her innocent beauty, and by the calm, confiding air of her silent resignation.

I learned, too, that he had been admirably impressed with the strange wildness, which had risked her life and my own by the refusal to shed the blood of the sleeper. Maria Cecil! how shall I describe her? First, then, she was the gentle, compassionate being, whom I had seen at the village in Savoy, gazing piteously upon the poor Cretin. This, with delight I discovered, as on the day after the strange eventful night at Terracina, I handed her into her carriage; a something in her air, her look, brought

back that scene like remembered music. I could not indeed have sworn it at the bar of justice, though my life or death had hung upon the issue; yet, internally, even then my heart would have sworn it, in throbbing whispers to itself. I have said that it was long before this charming being recovered her wonted composure, long before she could allow the soft light of the moon to give that happy calm to the exhausted spirit, which God meant it to shed over all innocent human beings who wake, or watch, or wander silently in the still season of night. To her the associations connected with that mellow, lovely light, were sad and terrific — Death shots, and flowing blood, and pale corpses, and female eyes glaring with mad revenge. But peace did return to her; and when it came, seemed like some dove which, startled and terrified, had fled away, but winged back stealthily to its loved nest, and having once more gained its resting place, and proper home, sat in it, murmuring low, and looking out serene.

It was long before I felt anything like attachment for Maria Cecil. She seemed to

me a desert lily ; an ocean gem ; a sweet, secluded, hallowed innocent girl ; a domestic daughter, home-loving, nun-like, knowing nought about the busy world. She was not beautiful, yet very beautiful ; in the lighted ball-room most would have passed her by. There was no elegant defined contour, no fine regularity of feature. Her eyes ! I never knew their colour — fair they were, light, gentle, loving, innocent-loving eyes, like those of happy children. Whenever she spoke, or listened, she raised and fixed them on you without a blush. I know not if she was musical — at least I never heard her play or sing ; but, when she spoke, it was a pleasant sound, sweeter than any song. I know not if she drew ; but I have seen her stand looking at waters, rocks, and trees, and forms, and ruins, as fondly as if she did. She was always up, and among the flowers, before the sun had dried the night dew from their glittering leaves ; and she would gather a nosegay, at that hour, for her sleeping father. He rose late — never came out — but used to sit at a window looking on the broad bay, and she

would read to him, or sit embroidering by his side, for hours ; or walk in the garden with her mother ; or play tenderly with a pretty little smiling child, the daughter of their gardener. In the evening they always drove out for air, but very seldom on the more public corso. Sometimes Maria and her mother would venture out, on foot, among the garden paths, on the gay height of Posilipo. I have often walked with them there at sunset hour ; every where that hour is lovely, but at Naples — stray from the city, — be alone ; or, as I was, in angel company, and you shall long remember it, with grateful, but yet regretful tears. The constant girl, who reads my tale, smiles at my broken faith — contemptuous smiles ; and why ? My Agatha ! — no, I was not forgetting her, — the goddess-like beauty, and the high, pure, chaste mind of Agatha, and her warm heart. No : in the peculiar character of my first affections, none could ever rival her ; my present feeling was not like that of ardent love, but it was a holier thing that grew up silently — that never flashed forth from my kindling eye — that never burned

in glowing words upon my lip. My faults, my sorrows, — I wanted shelter for them, in a virtuous heart. I wanted an innocent bosom, to pillow my throbbing temples on. I wanted to be led back repentantly to my country, to see my home again, a welcomed wanderer, and to go, live and die, in the plain, calm exercise of social virtues. I could not live on consentingly a blighted barren tree ; no branch, no leaf, no blossom, no fruit. The thought was agony. I had the gifts of fortune ; I wanted to impart and share them. I had afflictions ; I wanted pity. Solitude had ever been my cry — well, I was solitary — and sad. — I wooed, I won her. Long and happy was the season of that wooing. She had a fine mind, filled with rich thoughts, and pure imaginings ; we read together, spoke together, opened our hearts to each other on every thing but — Love.

One day, as we sat all together, the newspapers of Mr. Cecil were brought in, and he read from the deaths the following aloud : “ At his seat, near Beaulieu, in the New Forest, Hampshire, Colonel Frederic Hamilton, AID-

DE-CAMP TO THE KING, aged 59 years. He has left his large property, for her life, to his sister, Mrs. Charlotte Hamilton, and afterwards to Osman Beavoir, Esq., the only son of Walter Beavoir, Esq., of Beaulieu. The will bears date August, 1755. Some perplexity will arise on the death of Mrs. Hamilton, as Mr. Osman Beavoir disappeared from the town of Blois in France, where he was stationed, on his parole, as a prisoner of war, and has never since been heard of: little doubts are entertained of his death, but his disconsolate family still cling to the hope that he exists. His acquaintances at Blois are of opinion, that he destroyed himself in consequence of a very bitter disappointment. It appears he was distractedly attached to a very beautiful young lady of that city, who, with the strong prejudice of her nation, treated all his advances in a very light unfeeling manner."

It required no confession of the tongue. I stood avowed before them as Osman Beavoir: my extreme and uncontrollable agitation immediately betrayed me. What shame, what deep

indignation against myself, I felt and looked, as I rose, and rapidly quitted the apartment. A short, and loud-thinking walk in the balmy garden restored me to that calmness, which is always the immediate consequence of a strong-formed resolution to tell out the plain and simple truth. I requested to speak with Mr. Cecil alone. He was an English country gentleman of the very first, though not the wealthiest, class; elegant in all his tastes, noble in all his thoughts, was a delicate man, sickly in complexion, grey hairs, his shoulders bowed down with debility. In the eye alone shone out the retired senator, and the once manly hunter of the deer. I told him all — every thing.

I remember his reply: “I, Mr. Beavoir, have nothing to do with *forgiving* you. I fear you can never forgive yourself. For the romantic and chivalrous stranger from New Spain, the rescuer of my daughter, and a visitor most agreeable to myself, I had felt a deep, increasing interest. Strong as my objections are to form an alliance with the family of a foreigner, I saw the attachment which was spring-

ing up — I had resolved never to disappoint the happiness of my child ; but, Sir, I confess, this moment, which discovers you to me as an Englishman of old and excellent family, and of high expectations, exhibits you to me in colours of a dark and repulsive hue. How can I entrust the happiness of my daughter to one who has so trifled with that of his family, who has forgotten his pride as a man of birth, his honor as a captive, and his patriotism as an Englishman? Sir, you have made *me* unhappy. At my time of life, when our hairs are grey — a discovery, a disappointment like this, shocks us severely. I will counsel you, — go home — cast away this paltry, polluting wealth — a Beavoir, a man of Norman descent, sharing the mean spoil of a beggarly Jew. I cannot understand this — the Agatha you speak of is the only poor excuse for your wild, your cruel conduct.”

I bore this, bore it all with an uncovered face: I looked up, resolved, in stern penitence, to bear up my open shame — my cheeks were wet, though I could not be said to weep —

waters gushed out nervously from my eyes, and coursed down, and stained me as a man of guilt, but one returning from his ways.

He stretched forth his hand, and taking mine, sunk into his wonted tenderness. "All these things that you have done are bad, very bad; but you served me in my sorrow; you saved my daughter — you have cheered many an hour for a sick old man — I cannot forget these things. This door shall never be shut against you — come, come as you were wont hereafter, not now — go home now; but yet I pray you think not of my daughter any more — she must, she will forget you." But she did not; she had the angel attribute of true innocence. She could pity, she could pardon, she could condemn, yet love the sinner. Many days elapsed before I again ventured into her presence; nor were they days of hopeless, or unrelieved depression. I had turned back in my wretched course; — again, I should be Osman Beavoir — again, I should look upon those faces dear to me — once more tread the deep forest, where Vernon was wont to lead me; and the grave

of my sainted Edward, I should visit that. I would weep imploringly to Heaven to grant me Maria Cecil; surely there would be something granted to a prayer so virtuous; for who would seek to be allied with purity, that did not love it. I passed in at their garden-gate at the cool evening hour; the first object that presented itself to me, coming up the garden path, was Maria. As she raised her eyes there was a pause, — a something was urging her to turn away — but that feeling, whatever it may have been, was transient, momentary. She advanced calmly — she put forth her hand — she begged me to come in to her father — she spoke of the weather — pointed to some fresh-blown flower — patted her fond spaniel, and led me to the house; and then turning back resumed her walk.

I sat with M r. Cecil for an hour: he was quiet, and kind. “You will return home,” he said. “Immediately,” was my reply, “but —” “What?” — “May I hope again, at some future, and not very distant period?” — “It will be time enough to speak of this when we meet again. — Fly to your parents; within a year I shall be

again in England, and there, as every where, I shall ever be ready to receive you with the feeling of a warm, and I may add, Sir, from your services to me, a grateful friend."

It was already dusk when I left him. I found Maria still walking in the garden upon a terrace, which looked out upon the bay. There was nothing to be seen but black water, and one vast misty cloud resting, as it were, upon it. No star shone out; but near, a coloured flower or two pierced through the gray gloom, and, as you looked on them, and inhaled the perfume, you felt it was some bowery spot.

I came close to Maria, and I could see, even at that hour, that she was pale and thoughtful.

"You give me up — you despise — you will forget me?"

"No."

"You condemn me — think me base?"

"No — your father, and mother, and your sister, especially your sister, I have pitied them."

"Can you forgive me?"

"I forgive you! — none can forgive but God

only — none can judge but he. I wish I were your sister."

"Explain, explain."

"She will be so happy."

"My dear Maria, could you then again love me?"

"Go home, and embrace your sister. I have no brother. But there are titles tenderer than brother, — lover, — husband. No, I will not deceive you. I have, I have loved you; I could have given you my heart, — now, and through life, it should have beat for you alone; perhaps, alas! it will — but, oh! this fatal tale."

"Hear me, fair being, I will not rave to you with idle wildness. I have erred, frantically erred; — I have loved the early love of phrenzied passion; — but near you, I have been blessed, shelteringly blessed; — you know it well. Your calm and hallowed aspect has shed its peaceful glory on me, day by day; till my love of you has been, as it were, identified with yet a higher; and will you, will you, at such an hour, abandon him who clings to your bright

robe, who asks to live with you, and be at rest ? Maria, my earthly happiness, my bliss eternal, all that I may be here and hereafter, hangs on your answering lip. Nay — not yet — you shall not yet say no. Picture me again a wanderer, again an outcast, a lone, a blighted thing; — one, whom mercy has turned from — for whom her dove-like eyes are closed. My evil angel is here; — he listens for your answer, and fills the cup of woe, and scatters thickly in the poison of despair.”

“ Alas ! this is but raving — sinful raving : — speak not thus to me — you were the preserver of my life.”

“ Oh ! name not that ; if it is alone to gratitude for life preserved I owe your sweet avowal, to the winds I give it, and will study to forget the sound. — Again, I ask, give me but hope, a ray, a distant gleam of promised happiness — I have no wild, romantic, ardent wishes ; name but the period of my penance, I will do it all — months, years, I will serve for you at virtue’s shrine ; and when, in the full temple, all ask

some temporal blessings from their god — you, you alone will I petition for.”

“ I am not used to this. I am a plain, fond, untaught girl. I tell you truly, I have loved you, and if God wills that we should meet again, you then may see how well. It is late — Farewell.”

I took the offered hand, and kissed it with a trembling tenderness, as if it were (it was) some sacred thing.

Yes, said my joyous spirit, she loves me — ah ! thus it is with innocence. Ye sinners of the world, when guilt sits heavy at your heart — when sufferings and remorse bow down your wounded spirits — I tell you, go not to the proudly good ; to those, who warned alone by fear, tread sternly in the narrow path ; but seek the innocent young, or the repentant old ; their hands are, as hands from heaven, stretched out still.

A fine strong light of happy hope shone bright around me ; all my resolves were quickly taken : the journey home — the joy, the tender love of pardoning parents — the freely open heart of a loving sister — the quickly passing year —

the return of the Cecils, and the renewal of my suit — consenting parents, and the day that should make her mine — the forest scene, the holy place, the holy words — I was too happy; these things all swam before me in the wakeful night! —

One only day remained for me to pass in Naples. Mr. Cecil had most earnestly requested that I would not call to take leave — I had promised I would not. Still I thought I might innocently contrive a last, and loving gaze upon the form of Maria; and in the evening I took a large sailing boat, and went upon the water. Far off I went, and glided on the bosom of the tranquil bay, and looked around on all the pleasant shores, dear to me from their own beauty; from the delightful climate; but doubly dear because Maria's eyes had rested on them, Maria's tongue had praised their beauty, and to me, and with me, she had wandered in these lovely scenes. Her arm had rested upon mine, and I had seen her smile on playful children, and heard her sigh when the wretched passed her by.

And now, from afar, I saw her on the terrace — enough, to see the outline — memory filled up the portrait.

The garden hat of white Italian chip, round like the peasant girls, and the mild eyes, and dark brown curls beneath, and the light summer capucin of muslin, and the ribands green that tied it careless on: — beautiful angel! — how dared I hope that God would give me such a favored child. That eve, at least, I thought thee mine; that eve perhaps thy heart beat pityingly, and lovingly, and hopefully, for the worthless Osman. We both of us looked at the same glorious scene — both saw that set of sun. Had some bold painter, with imitative fire, but feeble power, thrown such a scene on canvas, the connoisseur had cried “Unnatural.” — Jewelled mosaic was that marbled sky, of every gorgeous hue we know, and thousands nameless; and broad, and bright the setting rays spread up behind transparent, and were lost in upper air; and then it changed; lower and lower sunk the great orb, going to where it is worshipped; and the sky became the brilliant

yellow of the topaz; again it softened; amber, pale amber, was the hue in which, as I turned to gaze, I caught, for the last time, the floating figure of Maria.

The breeze blew soft — the mariners sung their evening hymn most cheerily — pathos at every close; but yet most happy was the sound.

“It is a fine night for a sail, Senhor,” said the Padrone; “shall we stretch out of the bay?” A night sail had been so commonly my pastime, that it was his wont to ask this. “Yes;” and to myself I thought, that I would thus wear out the night, and watch the stars, and listen to the waves. We had just cleared the bay, when suddenly it fell quite calm, and the sail flapped heavily, and the sailors lowered it with laughings, and asked me if I would let them sleep till the morning breeze. I did not like the idea of giving them a long and tiresome row, so bade them do as they would: they smoked, and sung, and told their little tales, and, at length, I heard no sound but the breathing of tired men, thankfully sleeping. For a long time I continued lying recumbent, with my eyes fixed on those distant

worlds, of which we shall know more hereafter. At length I murmured my confessions mournfully; and poured my thanksgivings, and breathed my prayer, and felt forgiven, and felt hope, and thought of home without a fear, and then of fair Maria, attired as my bride, and kneeling with me at the altar; and seldom in my life have I sunk more happily or confidently to rest.

Quick treadings awakened me: above me was the livid Moor; the turbaned Algerine; his knee was pressed upon my body; one bare and nervous arm grasped fiercely at my throat, and with the other he held a naked scimitar, and menaced death — but he did not slay. — A dusky slave brought iron manacles, and chains. I was a captive, and to the Moor.

“Allah Ackbar” — “Allah Ackbar,” was the loud shout; and the poor mariners of Naples wailed bitterly; and I was bound and dumb.

They rowed us rapidly away, and their other boat kept close to us; and they were tawny men, with small skull-caps of red, and no hair but

the ferocious moustache ; and necks naked and bull like ; and the butts of pistols, and the hilts of daggers stuck out from their girdles ; and they laughed as they rose to their oars, and shouted, as in chorus, " Allah Ackbar."

In the pale grey hour of early dawn we came along side a large armed vessel. A golden flower pot, with green and yellow roses, was painted on its stern ; a flag, blood-red, with the half-moon embroidered on it, hung calmly floating above ; and as we came upon the deck, the crew were rising from their rest ; and some were combing out the beard ; some curling the moustaches ; some anointing the shaven head ; some lifting water, and performing the prescribed ablutions ; and they looked up at us, as we were driven forward, with mocking grins, and cruel eyes, and a contemptuous hate. All chained and wretched as I was, a something novel in this sight, a something realizing old descriptions, moved me to a kind of secret pleasure ; and now the light broke brighter, and one voice, loud, deep, and mellow, was lifted up, and you could not hear any sound beside,

were it even the rustle of a garment ; once my chains clanked, and eyes glared on me, and I held them still. In the short call, my ear caught six times repeated the "Allah Ack-bar," and I could distinguish "Mahomed Resoul Allah," and "la Illah Illalah" — "la Illah Illalah;" and the Moors all rose, and stood with naked feet, and with the open hands of peaceful salutation, and they raised them to their shoulders, and crossed them on their bodies, and silently, or, with soft under voice, they prayed after their leader ; and they burst out at each pause with the loud Ameen : and eight times they prostrated themselves, and with their foreheads humbly pressed the deck. The black slave, and the Aga, in his full turban, side by side, and their faces all turned to the sacred Mecca. Deeply the scene impressed me. I felt as the great painter, when a prisoner among banditti, that it were a sight to charm away for a moment the sense of misery. As my eyes rested on the groupe, methought one face was known to me ; large moustaches of a thick bristly red, overshadowed, in part, a

mouth hideous with a broken tooth; one eye was half-closed, the other scowled sullenly beneath the turban-folds; the blue collarless Turkish vest showed a thick strong neck; and broad herculean shoulders spread with a bursting strength beneath; a leg of vast proportions pillared the giant frame, and his voice was like no other, and his salaamings and prostrations were done with clumsy, reluctant effort. I could not be mistaken: it was the Lisbon robber — the violator — he that murdered the fair girl.

The prayers were no sooner over than we captives were summoned to the poop. The Rais was a short, thin, pale, cruel looking man. The deck was crowded; but there were no sounds, save alternately his voice, and that of his interpreter, and the trembling replies of a poor Neapolitan taken with me, who spoke the *Lingua Franca*, and then, at times, a long pause, and the gurgle of water as the snake-like pipe was slowly updrawn. The result of this was the taking off of my chains, and an assurance that, when my ransom was paid, I

should go free, and a promise of freedom for those taken with me, provided I would pay their ransom, to which I agreed; and there came to me a cunning looking interpreter, and he gave me a place, and a carpet, separate from the other prisoners; and gave me coffee and bread, and squatted inquisitively by my side. During the day I could get no privacy—no rest. I had no power to think of my situation, and, in the course of it, I witnessed a strange scene of Turkish despotism. There was a sudden tumult, and loud cries, and all hurried off; and they dragged with them the renegade.

He had struck, it seemed, the black cook, and had upset the food, and insulted the se-rang. Again all was silence, as, amid the hushed crowd, the two accusers told their tale; a muttered something fell from the prisoner, but the dead silence awed him, and he felt fear, and the savage eye looked apprehension. The Rais drew up his smoke calmly and slow, and the long gurgle echoed loud; and then a still smile just passed across his face, and he gave a motion with his hand, and they tied the

prisoner's arms behind him, and pressed him into a kneeling posture; and a large African came forward, and his eyes rolled white, and he raised the shining blade, and the hideous head fell to the death stroke, and sea water was thrown upon the bloody spot; and the huge body was cast into the ocean, and the fierce head stuck upon a fixed spike on the deck, and all dispersed, and washed their hands, and gathered round the mats and trays, and dipped their hands into their messes, and laughed as they looked up at the grisly warning.

To me the sight gave food for wondering thought. Justice had been delayed; but the eye of heaven had followed the shedder of blood. Punishment had, like a blood-hound with a wounded limb, tracked him unceasingly, and found him in a den among violent and cruel spirits, like his own, where he had thought himself secure. Nothing had more astonished me, than the suddenness of the execution; scarce two minutes elapsed from the wave of the Rais' hand to the death, and there

was no imploring, no struggle. Still as a forest beast, encircled by dreaded fire, he kneeled mechanically to the pressing hand, and gave his bowed neck to the expected sword.

It really was a scene of beguiling beauty, when we ran into the harbour of Algiers, and so many white houses, and minarets, and domes, and gilded crescents rising over them, lay spread before us, and we saw behind them a green plain, all garden and orange grove, with little villas sheltered in them, and behind, in the far back ground, mountains of Africa. I did hardly regret captivity: it would be short, I felt certain, and, from the received opinion that I was rich, would be made easy, if not pleasant, to me. It was a strange situation to have been in, and there were a thousand forms, and objects new, to fill the mind's picture gallery, and give it food for idle thought in after moments.

Many things determined me for the present to retain the name of Alvarez, and the condition of a wealthy traveller from Spanish America. In the first place, I had left, in that name, ample funds in a bank at Naples, which might answer

the immediate demand for the ransom of myself, and my boat's crew. In the second, as it was only to the family of Cecil that my real name, and my strange adventures, had become known, I did not choose to throw myself on an English consul, and enter on so much humiliating explanation with a stranger. The interpreter, on landing, took me to the house of a lean Jew; spectacles he wore, things that sat forward on his prominent nose, and which he looked through or over, as close attention or quick suspicion succeeded to each other, in his acute but restless mind. He was a man of sixty, his eyes were keen, and bright, and glassy; his beard black; a black that never would grow grey, that shone cold, and was peaked. He wore a rimless cap of rusty black, and a robe of thread-bare blue, and he was sallow. Yacoob was his name; over and over again he questioned the interpreter, and the Neapolitan boatman, and then me, through them both. At length he passed into an inner room, and we heard the sounds of locks and creaking hinges, and he came forth again with

silver, and counted slowly out the sum I wanted, and took my bill. Then he named his own garden house, and begged me to hire it of him till the return of the galley from Naples with the ransoms; and he tendered all services bowingly; and I was soon installed in a pretty garden, with a tall lime-tree, and with spreading almonds; with shade and grass; with flowers; a fountain; a cool hall; and a terrace roof, whereon to lie, and commune with the stars.

In one thing I was rather disappointed; as I was a captive, although of rank, it was not allowed to me to pass forth from my green prison, except for a short walk with the Jew, or the interpreter. Here I could see little of all that I had deemed would be so picturesque, and striking, in the manners and the costumes of the Moors. We only met the bare-bosomed peasant with torn vest and ragged turban, as he drove his ass laden with fruit, to the bazaar. Even he passed us with a haughty, unyielding air; but, whenever we heard the shuffling clanging tread of the loose-slippered Turk, or the

horse tramp of the Moorish soldier, we were fain to step on one side ; and, if we passed, in our path, veiled women, walking to the tombs, we durst not even bend our eyes to guess at their hidden forms. Still the fortnight ran by busily, nay, happily ; my every thought was rosy coloured bright — home, reconciliation, and marriage with Maria Cecil.

One evening, as I sat lounging on the Divan, the little black slave, whom they had left to serve me, was presenting coffee, and the long pipe, which, as a *passe temps*, I had learned to smoke, was just taken from the lip, that I might taste it ; when Yacoob came hurrying in, not as usual, with the slow respect, and the put-off papooshes*, but furious ; his glassy eyes gleaming with the fire of rage ; he beat down the coffee cup, and broke it ; he plucked away my pipe ; he bent down, and caught up his slipper, and struck me with it on the face with frantic violence. I was powerless from surprise, and I bled profusely, and when I raised

* Slippers.

my eyes above my shielding arm, I saw the interpreter with Moorish soldiers, who seized me laughing, and led me forth. Yacoob walked hurriedly by us the whole way back to the city. "My monies, my monies, you Christian dog; you robber. Well spake my brother Benjamin, never trust them, the dogs, the dogs." And he came nearer, and spate upon me; and the soldiers laughed at him, and me. "Your monies at Naples! you have no monies. No one knows you; you have robbed me." It was in vain I spoke; in vain I said there must be some mistake; in vain I spoke of Venice, and my wealth there: he was deaf, and would not hear me. At last the hurrying steps of the urging guard brought us to the palace of the Dey.

A large, fat, one-eyed man he was, with a green turban, and a crimson vest; and numbers of well-dressed Moors thronged round him, and the hall was filled with sturdy warlike men. He held his coffee untouched in his hand; and he took his pipe from his mouth, while the interpreter informed him of this matter; and the

old Jew was restless, now in low prostration to the Dey, and now in gestures of angry menace towards me. When he had fairly heard it all, he shook with heavy laughter; the duped Jew was a something that tickled his Turkish fancy: still, as he joked, he motioned with his hand, and some black slaves drew near, and threw me down, and my feet were put between the cord, and the staff; and fastened, and drawn high, and then severely they bastinadoed me, and nature spoke out in cries and groans, which I could not repress; thence I was carried to a large khan, where there lodged many white slaves; and they put a ring about my leg, and hung a chain thereto of twenty-five pounds weight; and stripping me of the clothes I wore, they gave me a jacket and trowsers of a coarse black stuff, and laid me upon dirty straw; and threw me a portion of black bread; and left me in bitterness, and darkness, and despair.

“I was no longer even possessed of that character of worth in the eyes of Moorish master, or Christian slave, which thousands of the miserable sufferers still enjoyed. Pity turned

away in utter disregard from one, who had sought freedom, and a fortnight's ease, by swindling. I found no sympathy around — I was alone, even here; and now it was no indulgent solitude — captivity — the lash — toil — the craving of hunger — and the bed of filth — cut off for ever from all chance of rescue or escape. Now, that I would have gone to my home, it had fled me like a vision of the night — now, that I would have chosen good, it would seem my hour of grace had passed away. What a night I passed! What nights — what days — for they were many, ere I could leave the straw wherein I lay! At length I could hobble with a tender foot, and was driven forth with the others; we were taken daily three miles into the country, where it was our task to clear out the foul bed of a large empty reservoir, — a kind of lake, which was to be refilled for the pleasure of the Dey.

Here, in the burning sun, they made us strip, and descending into the pond, we brought up the black, thick, stinking mud in our arms, heaped up, and pressed against our bosoms. If

to any human being such toil is bitterly degrading, judge what it was to me — a youth of family, and fortune, of gentle breeding, cradled in a mother's closet ; a thing to be close to her at every hour, and rocked by her alone to sleep ; a man of luxurious habits ; a sentimental wanderer ; all wild enthusiasm ; and poetry my daily food. What did I, you ask ? — Did I strike back when the slave-whip fell on me ? — Did I seek the means of self-destruction ? — Did I mourn, and sicken, and pine away ? Not so ; my mind sunk with my condition, — sunk low ; I toiled, and cursed, but yet I laboured submissively. I pressed eagerly for my scanty portion of black bread, and exulted with the others, when a few decayed olives were added as a boon ; and I bowed down, with the others, to the earth, whenever the Dey came out to look at his gardens, and, with them, I shouted, “ Long live our lord and master, Muley Abdalla.” Beggared of all that made life valuable, I yet was content to live, for I feared to die. I speak not of the fear of cowards ; for in battle, or in perilous encounter ; with hot blood, and mind excited,

few perhaps would have borne a better part; but here I felt, although in the extremity of wretchedness, the truth of that mighty master's verse:—

“The weariest, and most loathed worldly life,
That age, ache, penury, and imprisonment
Can lay on nature, is a paradise
To what we fear of death.”

and thus I bore with my chains and stripes.

It chanced one morning, as the Dey rode past us, that he was struck by my form, and features; he sent to me an officer, and I was called, all soiled, and dripping from my muddy labours, and told that if I would only assume the turban, and turn Mahometan, I should be received into the Turkish guard, and might make my fortune. “No,” I said, “I was born, and would die a Christian.” They bade me think of it, and answer on the morrow; and again, that night, I went home to the locked and crowded khan, the filthy straw, the scanty black bread; the noisome stench, and the constant

quarreling of the querulous Italian slaves. How many openings of better fortune, brighter chances, future escape, this proposal opened to me! "Only," methought, "only to bow down in the house of Rimmon, and to keep my heart still for the God of my fathers." It dazzled me as I thought upon it. The sleek war-horse; the armed ease; the life of observation; the study of their tongue, and customs; and the crowning moment of escape hereafter, when the eye of vigilance was closed upon my action. But recollections of a thousand disregarded things came crowding forward. The small, old church of Dibdin, and the black yew-tree; and the grey martyred lady; Vernon too; his voice, as he read the Sunday lessons; the sacramental bread I had first taken from his nervous hand; the pious tremor of his voice; and the reverential feeling with which I put my lip to the sacred cup. Edward too, sainted, and looking on me — no — all wild and unsettled as were my notions of religion, all undefined as was my timid, doubting faith, I thought upon those early days, and hugged my galling chains, and

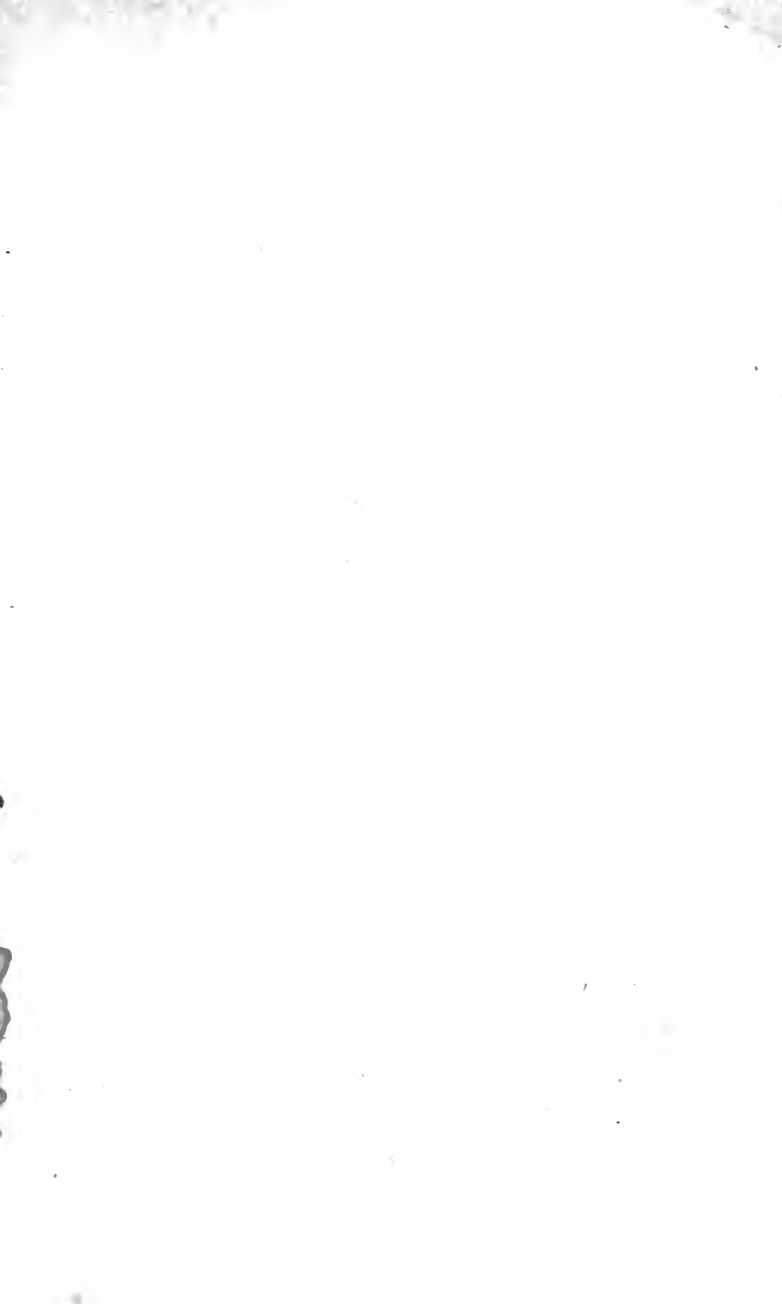
stretched my sore, and fettered limbs, and slept, upon my bed of straw, sound as a king might on his couch of down, or rather babe within its rocking bed.

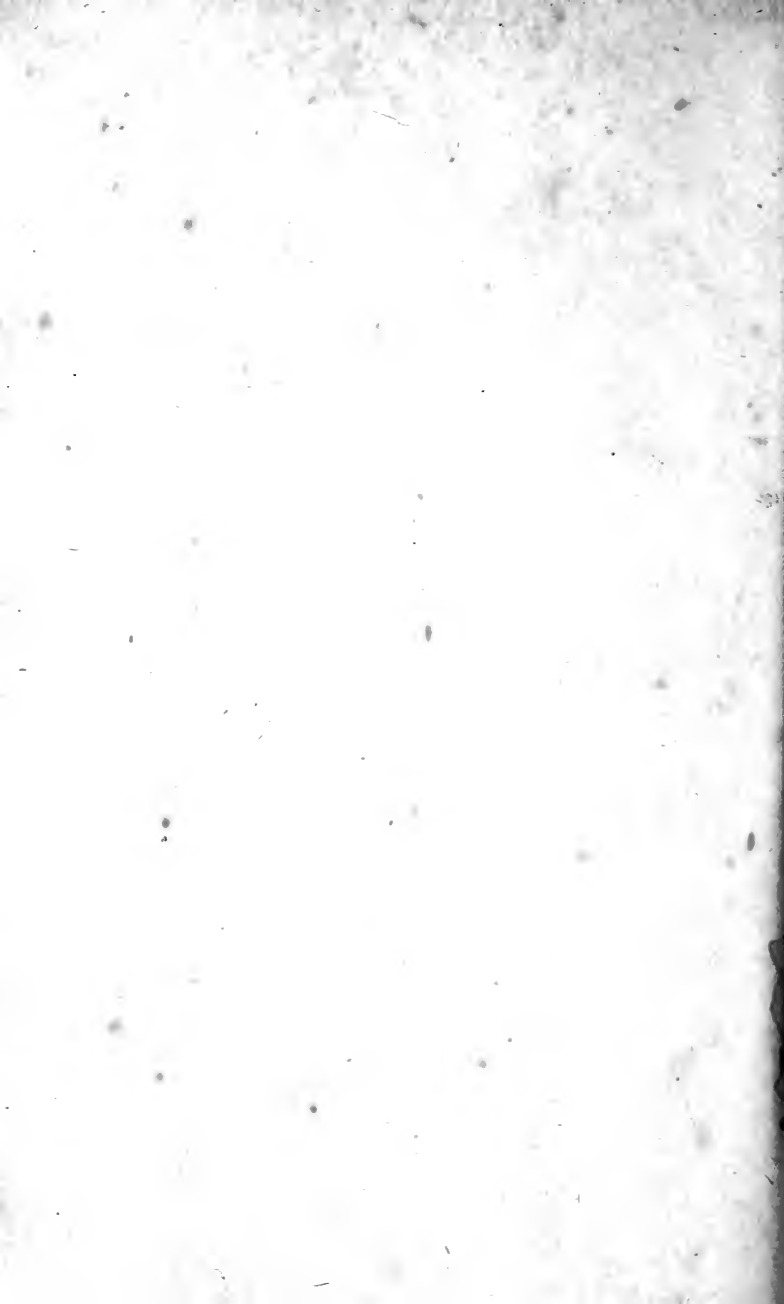
Cheerful I rose, and strong — smiled my refusal out; yet spoke it resolute. Three times that day the slave-whip drew my blood; twice I fell faint beneath the heavy burden of a weighty stone; but my heart was light, and presages of happiness played round my wakened fancy. Yes, I was now a sufferer, in some degree, for conscience sake. The tempter had been with me, and been rebuked. I might think again of home, and of pure things — of Edward in his grave; of Agatha the shade; of Maria Cecil, a living blessing wherever she dwelt. Thus, for many months, my life rolled by, and in patience I possessed my soul.

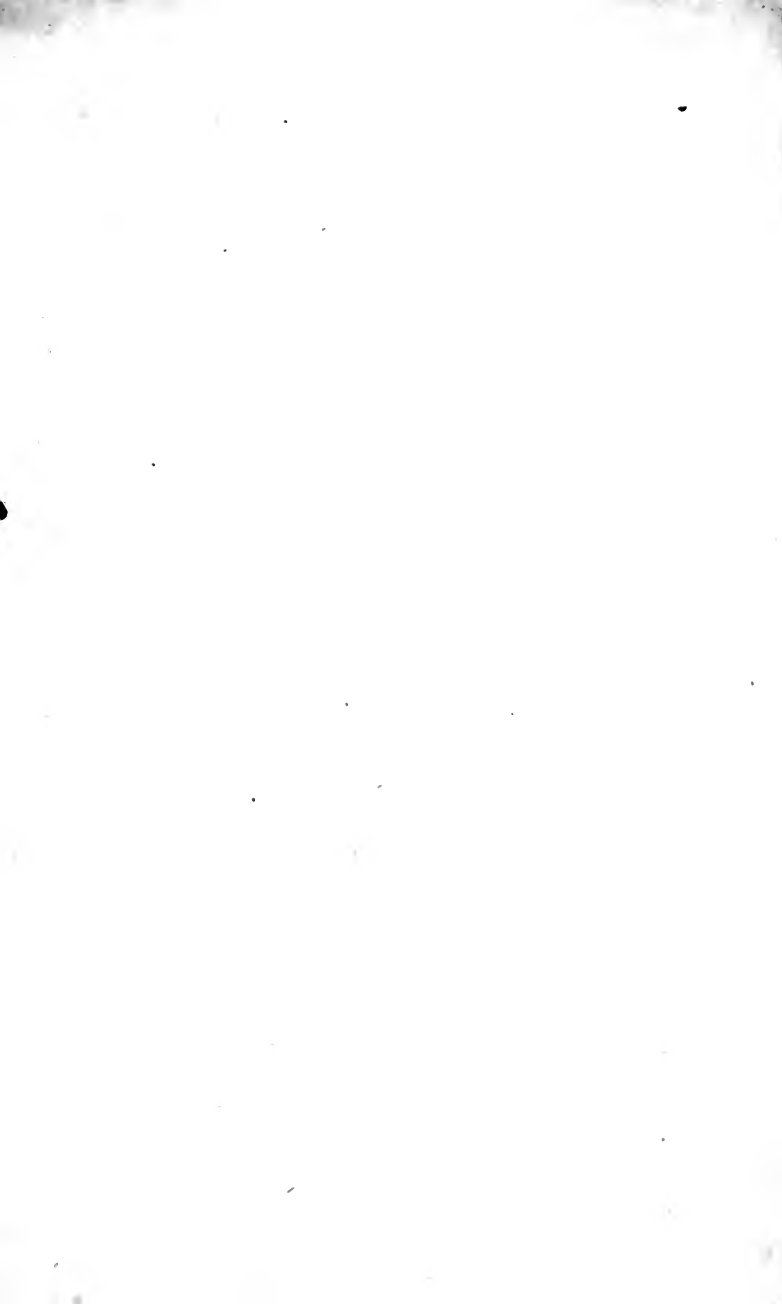
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